

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Saturday, February 23, 2013



Mount Rainier National Park Ranger Matt Chalup, left, hands park information to one of the first visitors to the park at the Nisqually entrance near Ashford, Wash. Visitors to America's national parks will encounter fewer rangers, find locked restrooms and visitors centers, and see trashcans emptied less often if 5 percent across-the-board cuts are enacted by sequestration.

(AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

U.S. National Park cuts detailed in memo

TRACIE CONE
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)

— The towering giant sequoias at Yosemite National Park would go unprotected from visitors who might trample their shallow roots. At Cape Cod National Seashore, large sections of the Great Beach would close to keep eggs from being destroyed if natural resource managers are cut.

Gettysburg would decrease by one-fifth the numbers of school children who learn about the histor-

ic Pennsylvania battle that was a turning point in the Civil War.

As America's financial clock ticks toward forced spending cuts to countless government agencies, The Associated Press has obtained a National Park Service memo that compiles a list of potential effects at the nation's most beautiful and historic places just as spring vacation season begins.

"We're planning for this to happen and hoping that it doesn't," said Park Service spokesman Jeffrey Olson,

who confirmed that the list is authentic and represents cuts the department is considering.

Park Service Director Jon Jarvis last month asked superintendents to show by Feb. 11 how they would absorb the 5 percent funding cuts.

The memo includes some of those decisions.

While not all 398 parks had submitted plans by the time the memo was written, a pattern of deep slashes that could harm resources and provide fewer protections for visitors has

emerged. In Yosemite National Park in California, for example, park administrators fear that less frequent trash pickup would potentially attract bears into campgrounds.

The cuts will be challenging considering they would be implemented over the next seven months — peak season for national parks. That's especially true in Yellowstone, where the summertime crush of millions of visitors in cars and RVs dwarfs those who venture into the park on snowmobiles during the winter.

More than 3 million people typically visit Yellowstone between May and September, 10 times as many as the park gets the rest of the year.

"This is a big, complex park, and we provide a lot of services that people don't realize," Yellowstone spokesman Al Nash said. "They don't realize we're also the water and wastewater treatment operators and that it's our job to patch potholes, for heaven's sake."

Continued on Page 2

Court to allow Obama's China wind farm ban

JESSE J. HOLLAND

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. judge said Friday she can't overturn President Barack Obama's decision to revoke a Chinese company's purchase of four wind farm projects in the vicinity of a U.S. naval facility's restricted airspace. However, U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson said the Ralls Corporation has a right to a hearing over whether the White House should be forced to explain its decision.

In his September decision, Obama ordered Ralls Corporation, a company owned by Chinese nationals, to divest its interest in the wind farms it purchased earlier this year in the U.S. state of Oregon. The wind farm sites are all in the vicinity of restricted air space near the Naval Weapons Systems Training Facility Boardman. The administration cites unspecified national security risks as the reason for blocking the transaction.

Ralls sued. Its CEO, Wu Jiali, said in Beijing in October that his company would "never do anything that threatens U.S. national security."

Jackson said the federal courts don't have the power to get involved in the president's decision-making on this issue.

The law "is not the least bit ambiguous about the role of the courts: 'The actions of the president . . . and the findings of the president . . . shall not be subject to judicial review,'" she said.

However, Jackson said the courts can hold hearings on whether the government deprived Ralls of its property without due process of law. Ralls argued that the Due Process Clause of the U.S. Constitution's Fifth Amendment entitles it to an opportunity to be heard and to hear the reasons for Obama's decision, she said.

"It is true that the finality provision will bar the court from hearing any attack on the president's findings," Jackson said. □

U.S. National Park cuts detailed in memo

Continued from front

The memo says that in anticipation of the cuts, a hiring freeze is in place and the furloughing of permanent staff is on the table.

"Clear patterns are starting to emerge," the memo said. "In general, parks have very limited financial flexibility to respond to a 5 percent cut in operations." Most of the Park Service's \$2.9 billion budget is for permanent spending such as staff salaries, fuel, utilities and rent payments.

Superintendents can use about 10 percent of their

budgets on discretionary spending for things ranging from interpretive programs to historic-artifact maintenance to trail repair, and they would lose half of that to the 5 percent cuts.

"There's no fat left to trim in the Park Service budget," said John Garder of the nonprofit parks advocacy group the National Park Conservation Association. "In the scope of a year of federal spending, these cuts would be permanently damaging and save 15 minutes of spending."

For years Congress has been cutting funding to

the National Park Service, and in today's dollars it is 15 percent less than a decade ago, said Garder, who is the nonprofit's budget and appropriations legislative representative in Washington, D.C. Park spending amounts to one-fourteenth of 1 percent of the federal budget, he said.

One in five international tourists visits one of America's 398 national parks, research shows, and the parks are one-third of the top 25 domestic travel destinations. If the cuts go through, the memo shows

national parks will notice fewer services, shorter hours and the placing of some sensitive areas completely off-limits to visitors when there are too few staff members to protect resources.

The Park Service also writes that communities around parks that depend on tourism to fill their hotels and restaurants would suffer.

Cape Cod National Seashore would close the Province Land Visitor Center, shutting out 260,000 people from May through October. Without monitors to watch over nesting birds, large sections of the Great Beach would close to keep eggs from being trampled.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park will close five campgrounds and picnic areas, affecting 54,000 visitors.

The more than 300,000 visitors who use Grand Teton's Jenny Lake Visitor Center in Wyoming would be sent to other areas of the park. The park's nonprofit association would lose a quarter million dollars in sales.

In Yosemite National Park, maintenance reductions mean the 9,000-foot-high Tioga Pass, the park's only entrance from the east, would open later in the year because there would be no gas for snow plows or staff to operate them. The town of Mammoth Lakes in the eastern Sierra depends on Yosemite traffic to fill its hotels and restaurants. □



Visitors view Half Dome from Glacier Point at Yosemite National Park, Calif. A National Park Service internal memo obtained by The Associated Press compiles a list of cuts in services in parks from Cape Cod to Yosemite. It's the result of an order by Park Service Director John Jarvis in January that asked superintendents to show how they will absorb the funding cuts.

(AP Photo/Dino Vournas)

Ex-Legion priest says saw fiscal improprieties

MICHELLE R. SMITH

Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, Rhode Island (AP) — A former priest for the disgraced Roman Catholic religious order the Legion of Christ said in sworn testimony that he witnessed financial improprieties at the order's operation in Rome, including the founder's use of large amounts of cash without any accounting, and said he believed the order's founder and then-second-in-command gave gifts to people at the Vatican to curry favor with them.

A spokesman for the Legion said the testimony concerned things that happened years ago, and that the order's accounting practices are now stricter. Father Stephen Fichter, who left the Legion in 2000 and is now a parish priest in New Jersey, gave the testimony in a deposition in November 2011 as part of a lawsuit brought by the niece of an elderly Rhode Island widow, Gabrielle Mee. Mee bequeathed \$60 million to the Legion before she died in 2008. The depo-

sition was included in thousands of pages released last week after The Associated Press and other news organizations fought to unseal the court records in the case.

Fichter and others have discussed similar allegations in the past about practices by the Legion, a conservative order taken over by the Vatican in 2010 after a church investigation determined that its founder, the late Rev. Marcial Maciel, lived a double life: He sexually molested seminarians and fathered three chil-

dren. But the documents released in the Rhode Island lawsuit contain the first sworn testimony to publicly emerge about the allegations from Legion priests, including from the Rev. Luis Garza, the Legion's former No. 2 official, who is currently in charge of its North American operations.

Mee's niece, Mary Lou Dauray, sued the Legion after her aunt died. She said Mee was defrauded by an order whose leaders orchestrated an effort to hide its founder's misdeeds from her aunt. □

McCain guardedly optimistic on immigration reform

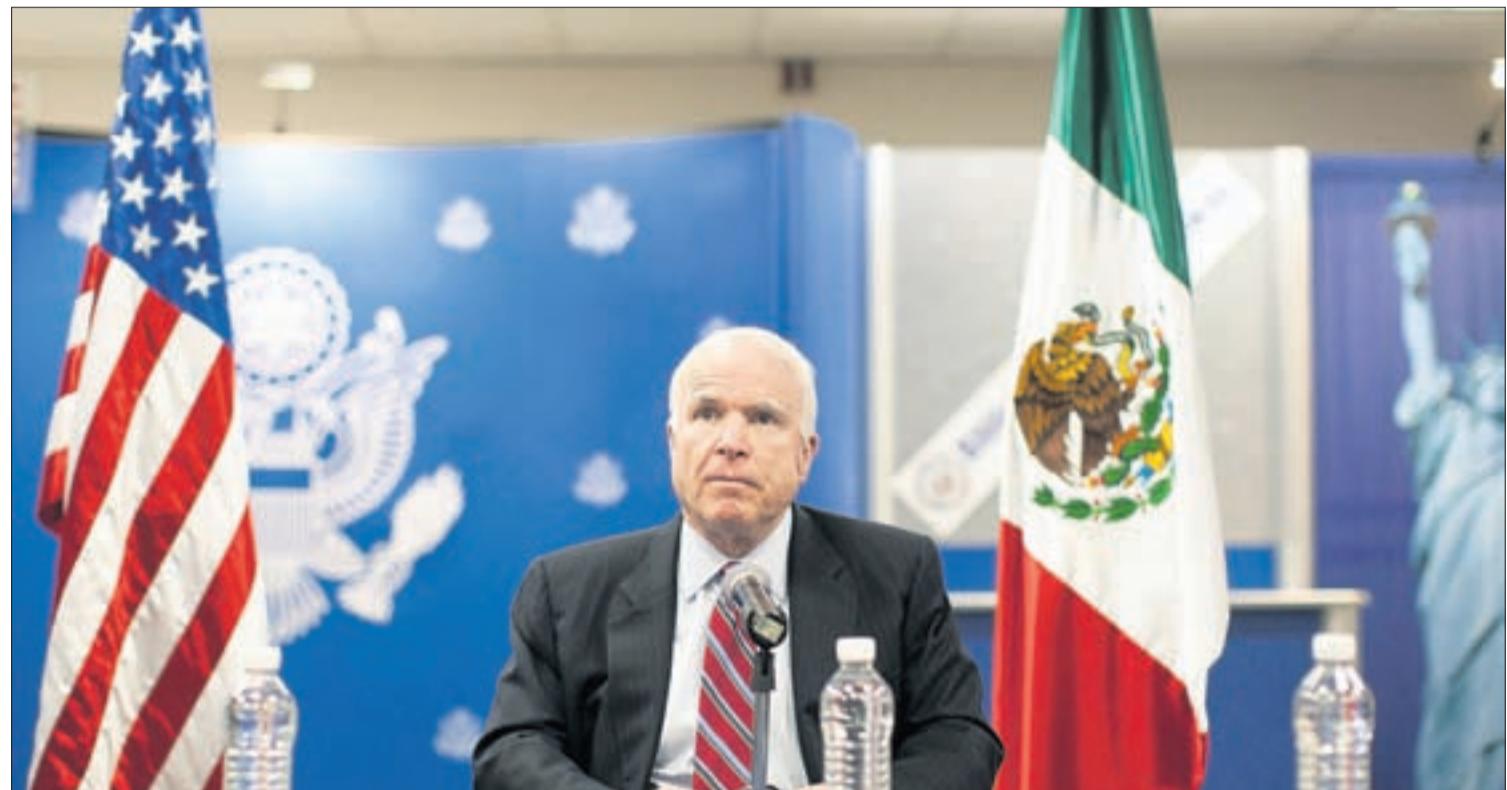
MEXICO CITY (AP) — U.S. Sen. John McCain said Friday that he is optimistic about producing an immigration overhaul that includes a path to legalization for illegal immigrants, but added that significant disagreement remains between President Obama and the bipartisan group of lawmakers drafting a bill.

McCain told reporters after meeting with Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto that many details must be worked out between Obama and senators trying to produce legislation. Asked about the prospects for reaching a deal, he said: "I am guardedly optimistic that we could by the end of the next month. There's still a number of agreements that need to be made before I can assure you that we will have a resolution."

McCain said he envisions immigration legislation including a way for illegal migrants to obtain legal status; a process for agricultural and low-skilled laborers to go to work in the United States; a provision for highly educated workers to remain in the U.S.; better identification cards for migrants; punishment for businesses that hire illegal migrants; greater use of advanced technology to prevent illicit border crossings and a special path for migrants brought to the U.S. as children.

"On some of those we have specific agreement, in other areas we agree in principle, but we have not resolved the details," he said. "We are making progress, but we are still not at a point where we can say we will succeed." McCain also said that former Sen. Chuck Hagel had been weakened by his battle to be confirmed as defense secretary, but McCain said he and Senate colleagues could work with Hagel at the Pentagon. Hagel is expected to be confirmed Tuesday after fierce attacks from fellow Republicans including McCain.

"I think he will have been



Republican Sen. John McCain, from Arizona, pauses during a press conference in Mexico City, Friday, Feb. 22, 2013. McCain says he is guardedly optimistic about producing an immigration reform proposal that includes a path to legalization for illegal immigrants but significant disagreement remains between President Obama and a group of lawmakers drafting a bill.

(AP Photo/Alexandre Meneghini)

weakened, but having said that, the job that he has is too important," McCain said. "I know that I and my other colleagues, if he's confirmed, and he very likely will be, will do everything we can to work with him."

Turning to Mexico, McCain said Pena Nieto had reassured him that Mexico would continue to battle drug cartels while reassessing the country law-enforcement strategy.

The Mexican administra-

tion that took office Dec. 1 has, at least in its public rhetoric, emphasized social programs and economic growth as the answer to drug crime, a change from the previous government's focus on a militarized offensive against cartels. That has provoked concern in Washington about a reduction in anti-drug cooperation with Mexico. "I have no doubt about his commitment," McCain said of Pena Nieto. "I think he feels that policies and

practices of the previous administration need to be examined."

McCain said the Mexican president had emphasized the need to reinforce Mexico's southern border with Guatemala, a new emphasis in a relationship that has focused heavily on the U.S.-Mexican border.

The Mexican government said Pena Nieto "emphasized the necessity and the benefits of diversifying the agenda and the dialogue between Mexico and the

United States," to focus on economic issues including the automotive industry and educational, scientific and technological cooperation.

Pena Nieto's government is in the midst of an international and domestic public relations campaign to undercut Mexico's association with drug crime and promote its relatively strong economic growth, driven partly by foreign investment in manufacturing plants here. □

Moody's downgrades UK rating from AAA to AA

LONDON (AP) — Credit ratings agency Moody's Investors Service downgraded Britain's government bond rating one notch from the top AAA to AA1 Friday, citing weaknesses in the economy's medium-term outlook.

Moody's said "subdued" growth prospects and a "high and rising debt burden" were weighing on the British economy.

The agency said rising debt meant "a deterioration in the shock-absorption capacity of the government's balance sheet, which is unlikely to reverse before

2016." It said, though, that "the U.K.'s creditworthiness remains extremely high," and its outlook was stable.

Moody's said that "a combination of political will and medium-term fundamental underlying economic strengths will, in time, allow the government to implement its fiscal consolidation plan and reverse the U.K.'s debt trajectory."

For the British government, the move was unwelcome but not unexpected. All three of the big rating agencies — Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch

— had placed Britain's rating on negative watch, as the economy continues to struggle.

The British government is in the midst of a program of spending cuts designed to reduce the nation's hefty deficit, but the austerity program has failed to stimulate economic growth. The U.K. emerged from a nine-month recession in the third quarter, when GDP grew by 0.9 percent. But the economy contracted by a worse-than-expected 0.3 percent in the last three months of 2012.

Treasury chief George Os-

borne said in a statement that the downgrade was "a stark reminder of the debt problems facing our country," with a debt accumulated over the years exacerbated by Europe's economic crisis.

"Far from weakening our resolve to deliver our economic recovery plan, this decision redoubles it," he said, promising to press on with debt-cutting.

"We will go on delivering the plan that has cut the deficit by a quarter, and given us record low interest rates and record numbers of jobs," Osborne said. □

Obama, Japan's PM signal solidarity on N. Korea

JULIE PACE

M. PENNINGTON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Japan's new prime minister declared Friday he would make his country a stronger U.S. ally and joined President Barack Obama in warning North Korea that its recent nuclear provocations would not be tolerated.

After meeting Obama in the Oval Office, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also sent a clear message to China: that while Japan does not want confrontation with Beijing, it won't tolerate challenges to its sovereignty over islands disputed by the two Asian powers.

Those regional tensions served as the backdrop for Friday's meetings that came just two months after Abe began his second stint as Japan's prime minister following a convincing election victory.

Obama said he and Abe were united in their "determination to take strong actions" in response to North Korea's nuclear test this month, which followed a successful long-range rocket launch last month. That has propelled the isolated, authoritarian state closer to having a weapon of mass destruction that could threaten the U.S.

Abe said he and Obama have agreed to push for tougher sanctions by the U.N. Security Council and spelled out why Pyong-



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe arrives to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va., Friday, Feb. 22, 2013. He is escorted by Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Phillips. The prime minister met with President Barack Obama at the White House on Friday.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

yang's actions are cause for worry.

"They (North Korea) have increased the range of their missile immensely and have attained the ability to reach even the mainland United States," Abe said at a Washington think tank after his White House visit.

He said Pyongyang was also claiming it has made a smaller nuclear bomb that could be delivered by missile.

Speaking through a translator, the Japanese leader said this was why the United States was pressuring China to exert more influ-

ence over its North Korean ally. Abe said it was important for the entire international community to do the same.

Most experts believe North Korea is still some years away from being able to hit America, although its shorter-range missiles could already threaten its neighbors.

Abe, a nationalist and advocate of U.S. relations with the United States, is the latest in a revolving door of Japanese prime ministers — the fifth since Obama took office. That's made it difficult to establish a personal rapport between Japanese and U.S. leaders, notwithstanding the enduring nature of the bilateral relationship. Japan hosts about 50,000 American forces and is a cornerstone of Washington's Asia policy. Abe outlined his policy to revive his nation after years of malaise by building a strong economy and strong national defense.

"Japan is not, and will never be, a tier-two country. That is the core message I am here to make. And I reiterate this by saying, I am back, and so shall Japan be," Abe said.

He promised to enhance Japan's role in international affairs, build its coopera-

tion with other democracies and promote open use of the seas and rules-based trade.

Japan's relationship with Washington has assumed more importance for Tokyo in recent months as it has locked horns with China over the control of unoccupied islands in the resource-rich seas between them.

The dispute flared after Tokyo nationalized some of the islands in September. China also claims the tiny islands, which it calls Diaoyu. It has stepped up patrols into what Japan considers its territorial waters, heightening concern that a conflict could be sparked. The tensions highlight the rivalry between China, the world's second-largest economy, and Japan, which is the third.

Obama did not address the dispute in his brief remarks, but separately, Secretary of State John Kerry complimented Japan on the restraint it has shown and its efforts to prevent a "significant confrontation."

Abe said Japan had no intention to escalate the dispute and that his door was always open to Chinese leaders.

But he had some words of defiance, too, over Japan's sovereignty of the islands. □

U.S. joining fraud lawsuit against Lance Armstrong

PETE YOST

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department joined a lawsuit Friday against disgraced cyclist Lance Armstrong that alleges the former seven-time Tour de France champion concealed his use of performance-enhancing drugs and defrauded his longtime sponsor, the U.S. Postal Service. The lawsuit alleges that riders on the postal service-sponsored team, including Armstrong, knowingly violated their postal service agreements by regularly using banned substances and methods to enhance their performance. "Lance Armstrong

and his cycling team took more than \$30 million from the U.S. Postal Service based on their contractual promise to play fair and abide by the rules — including the rules against doping," said U.S. Attorney Ronald Machen, whose office is handling the case. "The Postal Service has now seen its sponsorship unfairly associated with what has been described as 'the most sophisticated, professionalized and successful doping program that sport has ever seen.'"

In recent weeks, settlement discussions had been under way between the Justice Department and Armstrong's lawyers. □

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F-35 fleet grounded after engine crack found

ROBERT BURNS

AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

The Pentagon on Friday grounded its fleet of F-35 fighter jets after discovering a cracked engine blade in one plane. The problem was discovered during what the Pentagon called a routine inspection at Edwards Air Force Base, California, of an F-35A, the Air Force version of the sleek new plane. The Navy and the Marine Corps are buying other versions of the F-35, which is intended to replace older fighters like the Air Force F-16 and the Navy F/A-18. All versions — a total of 51 planes — were grounded Friday pending a more in-depth evaluation of the problem discovered at Edwards. None of the planes have been fielded for combat operations; all are undergoing testing. In a brief written statement, the Pentagon said it is too early to know the full impact of the newly discovered problem.

A watchdog group, the Project on Government

Oversight, said the grounding is not likely to mean a significant delay in the effort to field the stealthy aircraft. "The F-35 is a huge problem because of its growing, already unaffordable, cost and its gigantically disappointing performance," the group's Winslow Wheeler said. "That performance would be unacceptable even if the aircraft met its far-too-modest requirements, but it is not." The F-35 is the Pentagon's most expensive weapons program at a total estimated cost of nearly \$400 billion. The Pentagon envisions buying more than 2,400 F-35s, but some members of Congress are balking at the price tag. Friday's suspension of flight operations will remain in effect until an investigation of the problem's root cause is determined. The Pentagon said the engine in which the problem was discovered is being shipped to a Pratt & Whitney facility in Connecticut for more thorough evaluation. □



Master Sgt. Andrew Ehlers does repairs on an F-16 fighter plane in South Burlington, Vt. The Pentagon on Friday grounded its fleet of F-35 fighter jets after discovering a cracked engine blade in one plane.

(AP Photo/Toby Talbot)

Gov: underground Hanford nuclear tanks found leaking

S. DININNY

Associated Press

YAKIMA, Washington (AP) —

Six underground radioactive waste tanks at the nation's most contaminated nuclear site are leaking, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said Friday.

Inslee made the announcement after meeting with federal officials in Washington, D.C. Last week it was revealed that one of the 177 tanks at south-central Washington's Hanford Nuclear Reservation was leaking liquids. Inslee called the latest news "disturbing." □

The tanks, which already are long past their intended 20-year life span, hold millions of gallons (liters) of a highly radioactive stew left from decades of plutonium production for nuclear weapons.

The U.S. Department of Energy said earlier that liquid levels were decreasing in one of the tanks at the site. Monitoring wells near the tank have not detected higher radiation levels. The federal government created Hanford in the 1940s as part of the top-secret Manhattan Project to build the atomic bomb. □



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Most charges dismissed against ex-Blackwater execs

MICHAEL BIESECKER

Associated Press

RALEIGH, North Carolina

(AP) — The federal prosecution of five former employees of the private security firm Blackwater has crumbled after the defendants said they were acting at the behest of the CIA in providing five guns given as gifts to King Abdullah II of Jordan.

Federal prosecutors indicted former Blackwater president Gary Jackson and four others in 2010 on a long list of felony firearms violations involving dozens of weapons, including M-4 military assault rifles and AK-47s. All charges against three of the accused were dismissed Thursday at the request of prosecutors after a federal judge ruled earlier this month to reduce several of the felony charges to misdemeanors. Under a plea agreement, Jackson and former com-

pany vice president William Matthews admitted guilt Thursday on misde-

meanors in prison on 13 felony charges.

"At the time the Depart-



Photo shows a government imprint on a Bushmaster M4 rifle. The federal prosecution of five former employees of the private security firm Blackwater over weapons charges has crumbled after the defendants said they were acting at the behest of the CIA in providing five guns given as gifts to King Abdullah II of Jordan.

(Handout Photo)

meanor charges related to record keeping violations, resulting in \$5,000 fines and four months house arrest. They had originally faced

ment of Justice brought this case I don't think they knew all of the facts," Kenneth Bell, Jackson's lawyer, said Friday. "Through three

decades in prison on 13 felony charges, I think they came to know the facts, and did the right thing once they understood the facts."

Thomas Walker, the U.S. Attorney for eastern North Carolina, stressed that the case did result in guilty pleas against two of the company's top former officials. "Accountability is important even if it was the former president and vice president of Blackwater," Walker said. "At the end of the day, no one is absolved from properly reporting the movement of firearms and the defendants' pleas of guilty stand for that proposition." Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms raided Blackwater's sprawling training compound in Moyok, North Carolina, in 2008, seizing the automatic weapons. The company, which was registered with the ATF as a federal firearms dealer, claimed it

was simply storing the guns for the tiny Camden County Sheriff's Office. The company was limited in how many automatic weapons it could have, but law enforcement agencies are not. Blackwater contracted a sheriff's department employee as a trainer, an arrangement prosecutors said was intended to subvert federal firearms restrictions. Several of the federal charges related to a Bushmaster M4 rifle, three Glock handguns and a Remington shotgun presented to King Abdullah and his traveling entourage during a 2005 visit to Blackwater's headquarters. Prosecutors said the weapons were part of a bid for Blackwater to land a lucrative security contract with Jordan and that registration records tracking the guns were later falsified to claim the weapons were sold to individuals. □

Judge blocks shareholder vote on Apple proposal

PETER SVENSSON

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A federal judge is blocking Apple

from conducting a shareholder vote on a package of governance proposals, handing a victory to a

rebel investor who is trying to persuade the company to share more of its cash with its investors. U.S. District Judge Richard Sullivan in New York ruled Friday that Apple was wrong to bundle four amendments to its corporate charter into one proposal for a vote at next Wednesday's annual meeting. Shareholders should get to vote on the amendments separately, he said. Although the ruling was preliminary, before both sides had a chance to fully make their case, Sullivan said Apple was likely to lose. He granted dissident investors a preliminary injunction against Apple pending a full trial. Greenlight Capital, a hedge fund run by Wall Street maverick David Einhorn, sued Apple over the proposal because it would remove the board's ability to issue preferred stock without shareholder authorization. Einhorn wants Apple to issue "iPrefs," preferred shares with a guaranteed dividend, as a way of committing the company to sharing its massive profits with shareholders.

Einhorn has been trying to rally Wall Street to vote against the Apple proposal as a way of showing their displeasure with the company's capital-allocation policies. Right now, Apple hands only a small amount of its profits to shareholders through dividends and stock buybacks. The rest of the money goes in the bank, where Apple's cash hoard amounted to \$137 billion at the end of last year. That amount grows by about \$40 billion every year, much of it from selling trend-setting gadgets such as the iPad and the iPhone. Investors almost universally want Apple to hand out at least some of that cash, but Einhorn hasn't gotten much support for his "iPrefs" idea or his "No on Proposal 2" campaign. Apple didn't immediately respond to requests for comment Friday.

Last week, Apple CEO Tim Cook said the company's proposal puts more power in the hands of shareholders, making it difficult to understand why a shareholder would fight it. Calling Greenlight's campaign

a waste of time, Cook said Apple wouldn't squander money by mailing letters to shareholders to persuade them to vote for the proposal.

The California Public Employees' Retirement System, the country's largest pension fund, had said it would vote for Apple's proposal, because it would have strengthened shareholder rights. Among other measures, it would let shareholders vote against directors. Apple's stock fell 31 cents to \$450.50 in extended trading after the ruling came out.

"This is a significant win for all Apple shareholders and for good corporate governance," Greenlight said in a statement. "We are pleased the court has recognized that Apple's proxy is not compliant with (federal securities) rules because it bundles different matters in Proposal 2. We look forward to Apple's evaluation of our iPref idea and we encourage fellow shareholders to urge Apple to unlock the significant value residing on its balance sheet." □

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Rat tales abound in NYC after Superstorm Sandy

DAVID B. CARUSO

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — At the height of Superstorm Sandy, New York City residents watching seawater pour into the subway system couldn't help but wonder: What will become of all the rats?

Four months later, that's still

ago when a rodent problem forced a two-day closure of Magnolia Bakery, a Manhattan landmark often credited with starting a national cupcake craze. Within days, a city councilwoman floated a proposal to create a \$500,000 emergency rat mitigation program for storm-impacted

owners and baited the area.

But we did not see an increase in the rat population," the agency said in a statement. "Large storms can flush out rats, but they

also drown many rats, and the net effect of large storms is often a decrease in the rat population."

The number of rodent-related citations issued by health inspectors has

dropped as well.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which runs the city's subway system, the nation's largest, also dismissed tales of rats being stirred up by Sandy. □



A rat comes briefly out of its hole at a subway stop in the Brooklyn borough of New York, before retreating at the arrival of the F train. The New York City Council is considering a proposal to create an emergency rat mitigation program for storm-impacted neighborhoods. But some experts aren't so sure that Sandy's supposed rat surge is for real.

(AP Photo Photo/Julie Jacobson)

a mystery.

And experts aren't so sure about stories of hordes of displaced rodents fleeing the flood zone and taking up residence in buildings that were previously rat-free.

TV stations and newspapers have been rife with reports about rats infesting parked cars and fleeing the East River waterfront and exterminators enjoying a boom in business.

For some city officials, the last straw came a week

neighborhoods.

But the city's health department, which collects reams of data about the rat population and maps infestations looking for trends, said rodent complaints actually had declined since the late October storm, which was spawned when Hurricane Sandy merged with two other weather systems.

"The Health Department conducted extensive inspections in flood zones after Hurricane Sandy, provided guidance to home



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Up to 12,000 US, allied troops for Afghanistan

LOLITA C. BALDOR
ROBERT BURNS

Associated Press

BRUSSELS/WASHINGTON

(AP) — The U.S. and its NATO allies revealed Friday they may keep as many as 12,000 troops in Afghanistan after the combat mission ends next year, largely American forces tasked with hunting down remnants of al-Qaida and helping Afghan forces with their own security.

Patience with the 11-year-old war has grown thin in the U.S. and Europe, yet

Washington and its allies

feel they cannot pick up and leave without risking a repeat of what happened in Afghanistan after Soviet troops withdrew in 1989: Attention turned elsewhere, the Taliban grabbed power and al-Qaida found refuge.

In disclosing that he and his NATO counterparts were discussing a residual force of between 8,000 and 12,000 troops in Afghanistan beyond 2014, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said most allied defense ministers assured him they are committed to remain-

ing part of a U.S.-led coalition.

"I feel very confident that we are going to get a number of nations to make that contribution for the enduring presence," Panetta told a news conference at NATO headquarters in Brus-

sumption on which the post-2014 plan is built is that Afghanistan's own forces will be strong enough to hold off the Taliban on their own starting in 2015 and to prevent the country's relapse into civil war. The worry is that if the Taliban re-



Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, third from right, and U.S. Ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Ivo Daalder, fifth from right, arrive for the second day of the NATO Defense Ministers Meetings, Friday, Feb. 22, 2013, at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. (AP Photo/Chip Somodevilla, Pool)

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sels at the conclusion of a defense ministers meeting. The U.S. and its allies have managed to stick together throughout the war, despite differing views. The Europeans have seen the military mission as mainly aimed at promoting stable governance; the Americans have viewed it as mainly combat. Some allies, including France, have already pulled out their combat troops.

There currently are 66,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, down from a 2010 peak of 100,000.

In addition to targeting terrorists, the post-2014 missions are expected to be defined as training and advising a still-developing Afghan army and police force and providing security for the U.S. and allied civilian and military presence, officials said.

The largely unspoken as-

gained power they would allow al-Qaida to return in large numbers, defeating the original purpose of the U.S. military action in 2001. It's a touchy topic at this stage of a still-unfolding war, with Afghans fearful of being abandoned by their foreign partners and Washington and its NATO allies wary of committing too heavily to a corrupt Kabul government facing an uncertain future. □



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Oscar Pistorius gets bail as murder trial looms

C. TORCHIA

JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP)

— Oscar Pistorius walked out of court Friday — free at least for now — after a South African magistrate released him on bail, capping four days of often startling testimony that foreshadowed a dramatic trial in the Valentine's Day slaying of his girlfriend.

But as he was driven away, chased by photographers and cameramen, questions continued to hound the double-amputee Olympian about what actually happened the night he gunned down Reeva Steenkamp inside a locked bathroom in his home.

Pistorius is charged with premeditated murder, and even Chief Magistrate Desmond Nair expressed doubts about his story that he mistook the 29-year-old

model for an intruder and fired out of fear.

"Why would (Pistorius) venture further into danger" by going into the bathroom at



Olympic athlete Oscar Pistorius, right, and his sister Aimee, left, are driven to a relatives home in Pretoria, South Africa, Friday, Feb. 22, 2013. Pistorius was released on bail and will return to court June 4, 2013 to face charge a charge of pre-meditated murder in the shooting death of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp.

(AP Photo/Nelius Rademan)

all, Nair asked.

Cries of "Yes!" went up from Pistorius' supporters when Nair announced his decision to a packed

courtroom after a nearly two-hour explanation of the ruling.

Nair set bail at 1 million rand (\$113,000), with \$11,300 in

turn in any guns he owns and keep away from his upscale home in a gated community in Pretoria, which is now a crime scene.

He cannot leave the district of Pretoria without his probation officer's permission and is not allowed to consume drugs or alcohol, the magistrate said. His next court appearance was set for June 4.

Earlier, Pistorius alternately wept and appeared solemn and composed, especially as Nair criticized police procedures in the case and as a judgment in the track star's favor appeared imminent.

He showed no reaction as he was granted bail.

Pistorius left the courthouse in a silver Land Rover just over an hour after the bail conditions were set. The vehicle, tailed by motorcycles carrying television

cameramen, later pulled into the home of Pistorius' uncle.

"We are relieved at the fact that Oscar got bail today, but at the same time we are in mourning for the death of Reeva, with her family,"

said Pistorius' uncle, Arnold Pistorius. "As a family, we know Oscar's version of what happened on that tragic night and we know that that is the truth and that will prevail in the coming court case."

Dozens of journalists and international and local television crews had converged on the red-brick courthouse to hear the decision — a sign of the global fascination with a case involving a once-inspirational athlete and his beautiful girlfriend, a law school graduate and budding reality TV show contestant. □

Holding candles, hundreds pray for Hugo Chavez

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Hundreds of Venezuelans have held a candle-light vigil for President Hugo Chavez, praying for their leader while he remains in a hospital undergoing cancer treatment.

Chavez's supporters gathered on a large staircase in a hillside park near the presidential palace. They lit candles and sang along with a recording of Chavez singing the national anthem. Some wiped away tears. Others closed their eyes and prayed. A group of indigenous people in traditional dress danced around a bonfire at the base of the stairs. One woman blew on a conch shell, while others shook gourds as they danced

around the flames. THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. Check back soon for further information. AP's earlier story is below.

Venezuela's foreign minister read a lengthy letter from ailing President Hugo Chavez on Friday to a gathering of African and South American leaders in Equatorial Guinea.

In the letter, read on television by Foreign Minister Elias Jaua, Chavez said he was sorry not to be able to attend the meeting.

Chavez hasn't spoken publicly since before he underwent his latest cancer surgery on Dec. 11, and even written statements have been rare. Government officials have said Chavez is breathing through a tracheal tube, but they have

also shown a few letters and other documents with his signature.

In the letter, which ran for

about 1,500 words, Chavez denounced Western intervention in Africa and reiterated his criticisms of

NATO's military involvement in Libya in 2011, when his ally Moammar Gadhafi was ousted and killed. □

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EU says eurozone economy to shrink again in 2013

JUERGEN BAETZ
 Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union predicted Friday that the economy of the 17 member countries that use the euro will shrink again in 2013 even though it will see its fortunes improve in the second half of the year.

In its winter forecast, the EU Commission, the EU's executive arm, said the eurozone is likely to shrink a further 0.3 percent this year, in contrast to November's prediction of 0.1 percent growth.

Across the eurozone, it said the debt crisis and the associated belt-tightening

are weighing on activity — official figures showed the eurozone contracted 0.6 percent in the final quarter of 2012 from the previous three-month period. The eurozone has been in recession — officially defined as two consecutive quarters of negative growth — since the second quarter of 2012, when concerns about the future of the euro were particularly acute.

Many countries are in deep recessions, such as Greece and Spain, as they push spending cuts and tax increases to deal with their public finances. Others have suffered in the fall-

out, such as export powerhouse Germany, Europe's largest economy, which contracted by a quarterly rate of 0.6 percent in the final quarter of 2012.

Despite what it terms

economy will be 0.7 percent bigger than the same period in 2012. In 2014, growth of 1.4 percent was penciled in.

"The decisive policy action undertaken recently is pav-

pointed to an improving outlook, particularly in Germany. Much of the recent calm in financial markets with regard to the eurozone has been credited to the debt-reduction measures and a commitment by European Central Bank President Mario Draghi to do "whatever it takes" to save the euro.

The wider economy of the 27-nation EU, which includes non-euro members such as Britain and Poland, is also bottoming out, according to the Commission. Here too, it lowered its 2013 growth forecast from 0.4 percent to 0.1 percent. And in 2014, it expects the world's largest economic bloc with 500 million people to grow 1.6 percent.

One of the key problems afflicting Europe is unemployment, and the Commission said an improvement was unlikely soon, with the jobless rate in the eurozone rate swelling to a record 12 percent. □



People clash with riot police during a demonstration to demand jobs for the unemployed, against government austerity measures and alleged corruption of Spanish politicians in front the regional Parliament, in Pamplona, northern Spain.

(AP Photo/Alvaro Barrientos)

"headwinds," the Commission expects the eurozone recession to bottom out over the first half of 2013.

By the fourth quarter, it forecast that the eurozone

ising the way for a return to recovery," said Olli Rehn, the Commission's top economic official.

A number of recent economic indicators have

Ireland:

Plant sent horse labeled 'beef' to Czechs

SHAWN POGATCHNIK
 Associated Press

DUBLIN (AP) — An Irish slaughterhouse has been caught labeling horse meat as beef and shipping it to a company in the Czech Republic, Ireland's government said Friday, in the latest crackdown on alleged fraud in Europe's month-old scandal.

No other European government has pinpointed a single slaughterhouse that was mislabeling horse meat as beef.

Until now, any companies

found selling meat products containing hidden amounts of horse have insisted they were duped by others, while suspected slaughterhouses have insisted they either did not handle horses or labeled all horse-meat exports correctly.

But Ireland says its fraud detectives have identified the practice at B&F Meats, a small slaughterhouse in the County Tipperary town of Carrick-on-Suir that is licensed to debone both cows and horses, and im-

mediately shut down the facility.

Ireland's Agriculture Department said in a statement that detectives had discovered that B&F Meats was shipping horse meat "to a single customer in the Czech Republic ... using a label in the Czech language which, when translated, refers to beef." Officials said the mislabeling was happening in the plant and not later in the supply chain, which included a British-based meat trader. □

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Egypt:

Opposition claims election will increase tensions

AYA BATRAWY

SARAH EL DEEB

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's president set parliamentary elections to begin in April — a decision that an opposition leader denounced Friday as "a recipe for disaster" because of the ongoing political turmoil in the country.

About 15,000 people took to the streets in the Suez Canal city of Port Said to demonstrate against President Mohammed Morsi, hanging effigies of him in the main square. Residents have been on a general strike for six days, demanding punishment for what they considered a heavy-handed police crackdown during unrest in the city.

Morsi scheduled the staggered, four-stage voting process to begin April 27 and end in June. The newly elected parliament would convene on July 6, according to a decree issued late Thursday night.

He hopes the election will end the political turmoil that has beset Egypt for the past two years, since the ouster of longtime ruler Hosni Mubarak. The upheaval has scared away foreign investors and dried up tourism, both crucial foreign currency earners that helped the government pay for subsidized goods needed by the poor

for survival.

But Mohamed ElBaradei, who leads one of the main opposition groups, the National Salvation Front,

for amending articles in a new constitution that passed in a nationwide referendum. It also demands the resignation of the cur-

hood ministers and other Islamists. Morsi took over as president in June 2012 with the help of some opposition groups and Islamists who voted against his rival, a former Mubarak-era prime minister. Morsi's popularity has since eroded due to power-grabbing decrees temporarily issued last year that allowed his supporters to rush the constitution to a nationwide vote before a high court packed with Mubarak appointees could disband the process.

The vote took place during massive street protests against Morsi and the Islamist-led body that drafted the charter. It passed by 64 percent of votes amid low turnout and a boycott by thousands of overseeing judges.

On the second anniversary of the Jan. 25 uprising, anger spilled out onto the streets and violence again engulfed the nation. About 70 people died in a wave

of protests, clashes and riots in the past four weeks, and more than half were killed in Port Said alone.

Factory workers, activists and laborers in Port Said have held street rallies that brought the city on the northern tip of the Suez Canal to a halt, although shipping in the international waterway has not been affected.

Port Said commentator Sayid Azab said the city opposes Morsi's timetable for the parliamentary vote. "Everyone is rejecting the elections and asking how they can take place in the absence of stability," he said. Civil disobedience in Port Said has stopped work at the foreign-run Suez Canal Container Terminal.

Managing director Klaus Hol Laursen said 2,000 workers have been unable to reach the terminal for four days due to protesters blocking the street, and the army has been unable to help. □



An Egyptian man with his three children wear red during a symbolic hanging at an anti-government protest in front of Egypt's high court building in downtown Cairo, Friday, Feb. 22, 2013. The Arabic writing on the banners reads, "death is more honorable for me and my children than poverty and hunger," and "Jeeka, Christy and Mohammed to heaven." Egypt's president called multi-stage parliamentary elections beginning in April but a key opposition leader warned Friday that the vote may only inflame tensions unless there are serious political talks first.

(AP Photo/Khalil Hamra)

wrote on his Twitter account Friday that Morsi's "decision to go for parliamentary elections amidst severe societal polarization and eroding state authority is a recipe for disaster." The NSF accuses Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood supporters of monopolizing power and reneging on campaign promises to set up an inclusive government that introduces far-reaching reforms.

The opposition has called

rent technocrat Cabinet appointed by Morsi that includes eight Brother-

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Cuba: Raul Castro mentions possible retirement

PAUL HAVEN

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Cuban President Raul Castro has unexpectedly raised the possibility of leaving his post, saying Friday that he is old and has a right to retire. But he did not say when he might do so or if such a move was imminent.

The Cuban leader is scheduled to be named by parliament to a new five-year term on Sunday, and Castro urged reporters to listen to his speech that day.

"I am going to resign," Castro said at a joint appearance with visiting Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

"I am going to be 82 years old," Castro added, the hint of a smile on his face. "I have the right to retire, don't you think?" When reporters continued to shout questions about his plans for the next five years, Castro replied: "Why are you so incredulous?"

He said to listen carefully on Sunday.

"It will be an interesting speech," he said. "Pay attention."

Castro's tone was light and his comments came in informal remarks at a mausoleum dedicated to soldiers from the former Soviet Union who have died around the world.

The Cuban leader has spoken before of his desire to implement a two-term limit for all Cuban government positions, including the presidency. He has also alluded to the limited time he has left to overhaul the island's weak Marxist economy.

That has led many to speculate that this upcoming term would be his last, though term limits have never been codified into Cuban law.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland had no comment on Castro's remarks.

Most Havana residents had not heard about the comments, which were not shown on Cuban television, although other footage from his appearance with Medvedev was shown. Many reacted with skepticism.

"Who would they put in?" asked Marta Alvarez, a 45-year-old housewife walking through Old Havana. "But I don't think it would be now. It would happen in five years." Castro will be 86 when his next term ends in 2018. Up until now, all eyes had been on who would emerge as

flect on his responsibility, and that of his aging generation, to right Cuba's economy, noting that the actuarial tables leave them few remaining years. "The time we have left is short, the task is enormous," he told lawmakers in his year-end speech that year. "I think we have an obligation ... to set (the country) on the right course."

When Raul Castro does leave the political stage, it would end more than a half century of unbroken rule by the two brothers, who came to power in

States have been sour since shortly after the revolution. One of the key provisions of the 51-year U.S. economic embargo on Cuba stipulates that it cannot be lifted while either of the Castros is in power. Castro has implemented a series of economic and social reforms since taking over from his ailing brother in 2006, but the island is still ruled by one party. Fidel Castro is 86 and retired, and has seemed increasingly frail in recent appearances. The elder Castro was also visited by Medvedev, Cu-



Cuba's President Raul Castro, center, cups his hand to ear his ear to better hear a reporter's question outside the Internationalist Soviet soldier mausoleum where he attended a tribute with the visiting Prime Minister of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev, in Havana, Cuba, Friday, Feb. 22, 2013. The Cuban leader raised the possibility of leaving his post, during an appearance Friday. Castro told reporters he's about to turn 82 years old and added, "I have the right to retire, don't you think?"

Castro's first and second vice presidents during Sunday's proceedings. The positions are currently occupied by two loyal octogenarians who fought in the 1959 revolution.

Putting someone younger in one of those roles would be the first sign that Castro was settling on a potential next-generation successor, something he and his brother Fidel have never done, even as many comrades have succumbed to old age.

As far back as December 2010, Castro began to re-

1959 at the head of a revolution against U.S.-backed strongman Fulgencio Batista.

Armando Gutierrez, a 78-year-old Cuban-American lawyer in Florida and veteran of the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, said he hoped Castro wasn't joking about retiring, but doubted that whoever follows would bring true political change.

"Can you imagine 54 years?" Gutierrez said. "Not even the Roman emperors lasted that long." Relations with the United

(AP Photo/Franklin Reyes)

ban state-run media reported. Communist Party newspaper Granma reported that the two countries signed an agreement on restructuring more than \$20 billion in Soviet-era debt Cuba owes. The terms of the restructuring weren't announced. The debt has been a point of contention between Cuba and Russia for years. It was originally built up in rubles to pay the Soviet Union for services provided in the 1980s, and Cuba has questioned how much it should be worth today. □

Guatemala: No evidence of gunfight or capo's death

M. CASTILLO

SONIA PEREZ

Associated Press

SAN VALENTIN, Guatemala (AP) — A Guatemalan official said Friday there was no evidence that Mexico's most-wanted drug lord, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, had been killed in a shootout in the rural north, calling such reports a misunderstanding.

Interior Minister Mauricio Lopez Bonilla told local media that the original account was based on testimony from residents in San Valentin near the Mexican border, but that soldiers and police scanning the area found no sign of any confrontation.

"I apologize if there was a misunderstanding," Lopez told the Guatemalan radio station Emisores Unidos. "It was a mix-up. We were referring to information generated from the area that there was possibly a crime scene with a dead person resembling El Chapo."

Authorities mounted the search Friday in the tropical state of Peten, an isolated area known for the transport of livestock.

"As of now, we have no verification," Lopez said.

An Associated Press photographer in the area also found no signs of shootout or victims, just a checkpoint of 12 soldiers stopping vehicles in an area considered to be held by Mexico's Zetas cartel, Guzman's biggest rivals.

Guzman heads the Sinaloa cartel, Mexico's most powerful international drug-trafficking network, and has been in hiding since escaping from a Mexican prison in a laundry cart in 2001. He is one of the world's most wanted fugitives, as well as one of the richest. Forbes magazine has estimated his fortune at \$1 billion. Lopez said on Thursday that authorities were investigating whether Guzman was one of at least two men killed in the remote area. □

LOCAL Aruba TODAY



Fundraising for Clown Doctors Aruba:

Bear's Story, and how an ordinary blue bear becomes an ambassador of hope

- In memory of Julien Collot
October 15, 2002 – January 21, 2011

PALM BEACH - Today we are launching a new fundraising program for the Clown Doctors Aruba. We have recruited a soft blue bear to help us. As the bear travels around the globe escorting business people and families, he will be raising funds for the Clown Doctors Aruba, a not-for-profit organization whose sole purpose is to bring smiles and hope to hospitalized children, mentally handicapped children and the elderly living in local nursing homes. Our story begins with a little boy by the name of Julien Collot who owned the blue bear:

A little boy, a beautiful, super intelligent, tri-lingual kid from Chatham, New Jersey, with light brown hair and amber brown eyes, lost his fierce battle with Leukemia just a few months past his 8th birthday. His name was Julien Collot. He passed away on January 21st, of 2011, having been sick and hospital-

ized for over five years. Julien was first diagnosed in 2006, and while his mom Jacqueline and his dad Thierry supported by a loving large extended family went to the end on the world and back in supreme efforts to ease his pain and fight for a cure, his two bone marrow transplants delivered further complications challenging and testing the limitations of modern medicine.

In his lifetime, Julien loved Aruba, and he came here a number of times with happy parents, grandparents and cousins. He celebrated his third birthday on the island, before the onset of his disease, in an unforgettable party, and always dreamed about coming back here, where his family owns timeshare condos, enjoying the friendship of many locals.

Julien's mother Jacky, gave Peter Balliere, of the Clown Doctors Aruba foundation his blue bear, named Bear, hoping Bear will travel and have a great time, raising awareness for the disease as well as raising much-needed



funds which will be used to bring hope to the hopeless, teaching everyday that we can make a difference.

With Peter Balliere's help, Julien's Bear embarks today, February 21st, 2013, on his journey traveling the world reminding us of his mission. Bear is the main protagonist of this adventure, and he is inviting anyone and everyone to take him on a trip, a family vacation or a business meeting. Bear also loves confer-

ences, and they could be anywhere in the world.

If you take Bear along as your companion, we ask you to make a small donation per mile traveled. Along with Bear comes an introduction letter to his travel companion. Ideally, the person who escorts Bear should spend time with him visiting points of interest in any community or city, taking his pictures at focal points of interest, for his Facebook page. It would be great if a story

accompanies Bear's trip, telling fans and friends where he's been. We would love to know where Bear went, as this is the wish of Jacky & Thierry Collot.

You may send the letter and pictures via email to us at: juliensbear@gmail.com. When we receive them, we will map Bear's trip, post his experiences, and learn about the community he has visited. We will add the letter to his Facebook page, which will keep track of Bear's journey throughout the year.

If you have any questions or concerns about this project please do not hesitate to contact Peter Balliere at: peter_balliere@hotmail.com

Thank you in advance for your participation in Bear's Story, in which an ordinary blue bear becomes an ambassador of hope!

Pictured here: press conference to announce Bear's travels at Taste of Belgium, with Godmother of the Clown Doctors Aruba Rona Coster and Godfather of the Clown Doctors Ruben Garcia. □

On March 9th And 10th:**Dermatologists Of Aruba To Host “Bo Ta Check Bo Quero?”**

Beauty
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Alejandra
Marquez

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ORANJESTAD - The dermatologists of Aruba will be hosting a skin cancer screening (Bo ta check bo quero?) for the public on 16th of March from 9-12 and 13-16 at the Dermatology Center (Oranjestad, Stadionweg 16), and on 17th of March from 9-12 and 13-16 at the IMSAN (San Nicolas). "Current estimates are that one in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime," dr. Nuris Lampe said. "That's why raising awareness of skin cancer in our community through this "Bo ta check bo quero?" is so important." There are three main goals: Creating of an increased awareness for the danger of UV radiation. How to protect your skin, how to check your skin and how to recognize a sun damaged skin? To provide insight in the scale of the problem skin cancer on Aruba and worldwide. Create awareness among people to regularly check your skin (self-examination) to be able to recognize skin cancer in an early stage. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun is the most important preventable cause of all skin cancers, including melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. Protect your skin by seeking shade, and wearing sunscreen and protective clothing. Early detection also is vital to effectively treat skin cancer. Regularly check your skin for moles that are growing, changing or bleeding, and make an appointment with a dermatologist if you see anything suspicious. Please register for "Bo ta check bo quero" by sending an email to checkboquero@gmail.com or call 5885506 prior to the event. You can also contact us for more information. To learn more about ways to prevent and detect skin cancer, or to find a local dermatologist, visit www.bestdermaclinicaruba.com or www.facebook.com/DermaClinicAruba. □

The Gold Mine Ranch Earns Tripadvisor Certificate of Excellence



ORANJESTAD-The Gold Mine Ranch Horseback Riding Tours is proud to announce that they have received a Tripadvisor Certificate of Excellence award. The Tripadvisor Certificate of Excellence is an award for hospitality excellence, given only to establishments that consistently achieve outstanding traveler reviews on Tripadvisor.com, the world's largest travel site. Only 10 percent of listed businesses worldwide receive this prestigious award, if they qualify, by maintaining an overall rating of four or higher out of a possible five, in reviews submitted by travelers on Tripadvisor. The Gold Mine Ranch is rated a five star attraction, ranked at #3 in Aruba out of a list of 75 attractions.

The Gold Mine Ranch is honored to receive the Tripadvisor Certificate of Excellence award for the year 2012. "It is with great pride that we accept this award.

Our family and staff work with great motivation, dedication and perseverance to be the best horseback riding ranch on Aruba"-Jay Dijkhoff. The Gold Mine Ranch is a family operated company that aims to provide the best service to guests.

The Ranch provides horseback adventure trail rides on well-trained horses covering over 7 panoramic views, including beaches. As a plus they are the only ranch in Aruba that offers rides to the Hidden Valley & Lagoon and the Indian trail, sites that can only be seen while on horseback. It's no wonder that many guests agree that The Gold Mine Ranch has been the highlight of their vacation on review sites such as Tripadvisor.com.

"We would like to thank all our guests who have supported us throughout the years and all our reviewers for taking the time to write their candid comments on Tripadvisor. We are committed to our

promise to provide exciting horseback adventures, not just trail rides. To all our guests, thank you for letting us be the highlight of your vacation".

The Gold Mine Ranch is a family operated horse ranch that offers exciting horseback adventures in the North-east side of the island of Aruba, in the Caribbean. More than just trail rides, the Ranch offers group or private tours to small intimate groups on well trained horses & tailored to the needs or skills of each rider.

Accommodations are possible for families, friends, couples as well as beginners through advanced riders. As the only ranch that offers rides passed over 7 panoramic views, and the only Ranch awarded for its superb service and hospitality, many regard the Gold Mine Ranch as the 'highlight of their vacation'. For more information visit www.thegoldmineranch.com. □

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PALM BEACH - One early morning Kathy Wilson went out to get some coffee and decided to play the 25-cent slot machine she always plays and won \$2,500. Wow! This is a nice way to say, 'good morning!' Kathy then responded, "Canada, I love you but Aruba is always my home away from home."

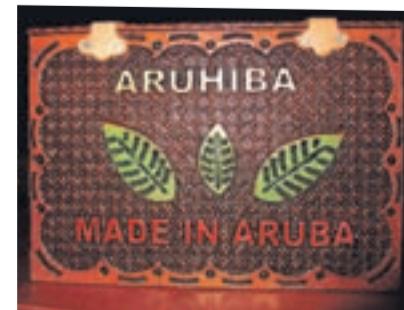


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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had a interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers Aruhiba as a promotion for Aruba through its fine cigars. The company sells Aruhiba to the international markets as well. Visit their retail store located in front of the Historic Dutch Windmill in front of the Westin Resort, with any purchase of \$20 and up you receive a free "Aruhiba" cigar or ask for their gift box of 5 cigars get 1 FREE for only \$37. They open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am till 6:30 pm and on Sundays from 9 am to 1 pm. Aruhiba cigars are now available at the gift stores in your resort and at well-known cigar stores. For their complete selection and attractive by the box prices visit their retail store. Tours are also available at their Tobacco farm where their cigars are grown and rolled.



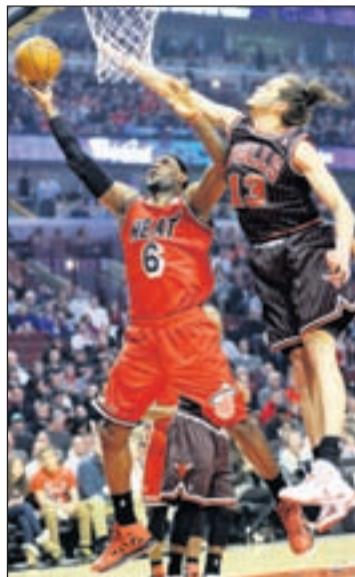
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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



NBA Capsules



Miami Heat forward LeBron James (6) drives to the basket against Chicago Bulls center Joakim Noah during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Chicago, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013.

Associated Press

**James scores
26, Heat
beat Bulls
86-67**

The Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — LeBron James scored 26 points and grabbed 12 rebounds, and the Miami Heat beat the Chicago Bulls 86-67 Thursday for their season-high ninth straight win. James also had seven assists in another big performance after seeing his franchise-record run of scoring at least 30 end at seven games the previous night in Atlanta. Dwyane Wade added 17 points, and the Heat took control in the first half, sending the Bulls to their fifth loss in seven games on a night when the Derrick Rose recovery story took another twist. Rose had to go into damage control mode after his older brother Reggie blasted the organization in an ESPNChicago.com article for not making a move before Thursday's trade deadline.

Continued on page 21

ALL EYES ON DANICA

Patrick should boost fan interest in NASCAR

Danica Patrick waves to fans during driver introductions before the Budweiser Duel 1 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race at Daytona International Speedway, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

Page 20

U.S. teen wins women's ski jump gold

DANIELLA MATAR

Associated Press

VAL DI FIEMME, Italy (AP)

— American teenager Sarah Hendrickson won the women's ski jumping title Friday after beating main rival Sara Takanashi of Japan at the Nordic skiing world championships.

The 18-year-old Hendrickson outjumped Takanashi with a 106-meter effort on the normal hill in the first round and scored a total of 253.7 points. Her Japanese rival finished with 251.0.

Both jumped 103 meters in the second round.

"I can't even put it into words right now," said Hendrickson, of Park City, Utah. "I'm so happy. I had confidence on this hill and I knew I could have good jumps. But standing at the top of the first round, my heart was beating and everything was shaking and I didn't know if I could pull it off. But obviously I pulled together two good jumps."

Austria's Jacqueline Seifriedsberger was third with a total of 237.2 points. Her best effort of 104 meters came in the first round.



Sarah Hendrickson of the United States soars through the air to win the women's ski jumping HS 106 Individual at the Nordic Ski World Championships in Val di Fiemme, Italy, Friday, Feb. 22, 2013.

Associated Press

It is a positive sign for Hendrickson ahead of next year's Olympics, where women's ski jumping will feature for the first time.

"The first jump is really important for me mentally," Hendrickson said. "If I can have a good first jump I know I can have a good second jump. If I have a hard first jump sometimes I mentally shut down, so that was really important for me.

"Before the second jump it was snowing a bit up there

so that blocked out the sound, which I really like. So I had no idea how far Sara went on the second round. I could hear the crowd roar but you never know with that. I just knew I had to do my jump and forget about the other stuff."

The 16-year-old Takanashi has won the last four World Cup events and also triumphed in the junior world championship last month, where Hendrickson finished sixth.

"Sarah is my strongest ri-

val, my favorite jumper," Takanashi said. "The world championships are very different to World Cup events. All I can do is do my best."

Hendrickson won back-to-back World Cup events on the same hill at Val di Fiemme last season, setting the hill record with a 108-meter effort.

She dedicated the win to coach Paolo Bernardi, who comes from the region whose mother died this month. "This is hometown for Paolo, where he was born and raised," Hendrickson said. "His dad basically built these ski jumps. I've had an amazing relationship with him over the past two years he's been coaching us, so to share this in his hometown is awesome. No words needed to be exchanged, just all hugs and happiness."

She is the second American to become the women's world champion after Lindsey Van won the inaugural event in 2009 in Liberec, Czech Republic. Van finished 16th on Friday.

□



Kei Nishikori, of Japan, returns a shot to Marin Cilic, of Croatia, during a quarterfinal round tennis match at the U.S. National Indoor Championships on Friday, Feb. 22, 2013, in Memphis, Tenn.

Associated Press

Nishikori upsets Cilic to reach semis

MEMPHIS (AP) — Top-seed Marin Cilic lost in straight sets to Kei Nishikori of Japan in the quarterfinals Friday of the U.S. National Indoor Championships.

Nishikori's 6-2, 6-2 victory denied Cilic an opportunity to win back-to-back ATP World Tour titles. Cilic claimed his ninth career title two weeks ago in Zagreb, Croatia, and had won nine of 11 matches this year.

Australia's Marinko Matosevic also advanced, winning 6-7(6), 6-3, 6-4 over No. 7 seed Alexandr Dolgopolov.

Cilic's loss left the tournament without any of its top four seeds in the semifinals. Second-seed Milos Raonic, third-seed John Isner and fourth-seed Sam Querrey were eliminated by the second round.

Nishikori, the fifth seed, reached his second semifinal of the year. He opened the year reaching the same round in Brisbane.

Nishikori played nearly flawless tennis after breaking Cilic to go up 3-2 in the first set. He broke Cilic twice in the second set to take a 4-1 lead and did not face a break point. Nishikori smashed a forehand winner on match point to advance. □

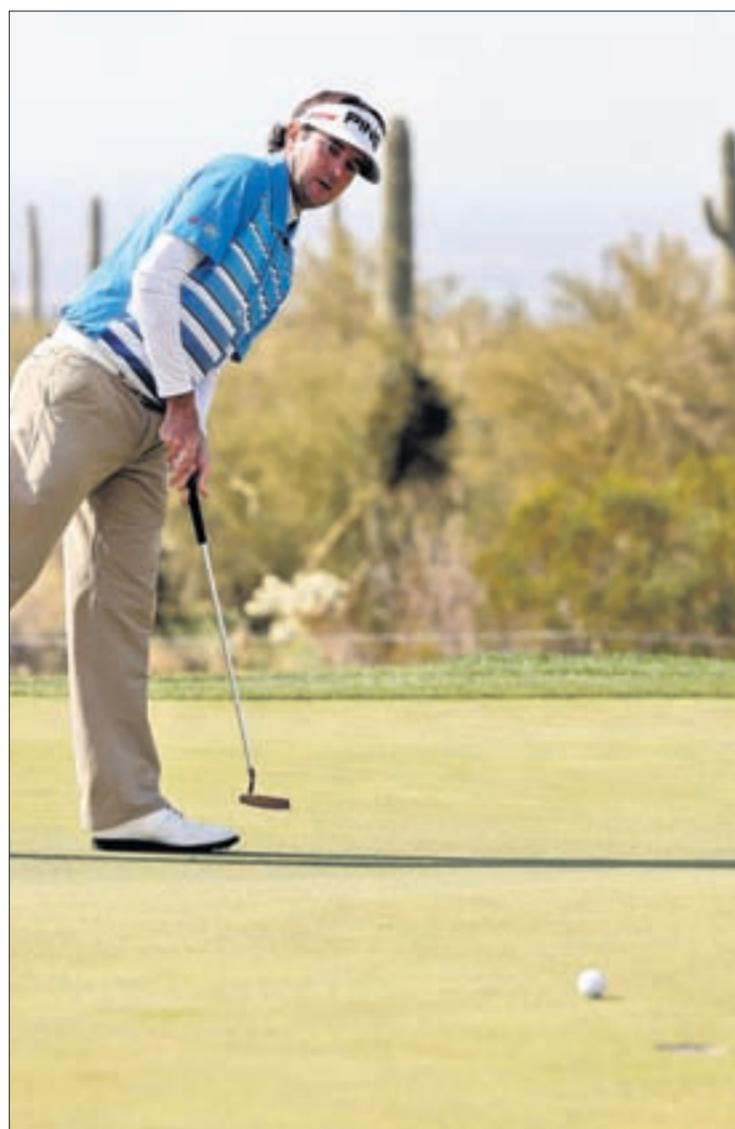
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Bubba Watson reacts as his putt misses on the fourth green in the second round of play against Jim Furyk during the Match Play Championship golf tournament, Friday, Feb. 22, 2013, in Marana, Ariz.

Associated Press

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

MARANA, Arizona (AP) — And then there was one.

One day after Rory McIlroy and Tiger Woods went home, more top seeds followed Friday in the Match Play Championship until Masters champion Bubba Watson was the only seed from the top 10 remaining at Dove Mountain.

And even that wasn't easy. Watson, the No. 8 seed, missed two straight putts from 5 feet that would have won the match before he finally put away Jim Furyk in 22 holes. It was the first time since this World Golf Championship began in 1999 that only one top-10 seed was left after two rounds.

What does that mean?

"Nothing," Watson said. "This game ... it's a toss-up. You can't really judge who's going to win, or bet who's going to win."

Luke Donald, the No. 3 seed who birdied his last two holes on Thursday to win his opening match,

Watson the only top 10 seed left at Match Play

Justin Rose, the No. 5 seed, couldn't keep up with Nicolas Colsaerts and lost, 4 and 2.

Shane Lowry earned a footnote in history at this 15-year-old tournament. After knocking out McIlroy on the 18th hole of the first round, the burly Irishman became the first No. 64 seed to advance to the third round. This wasn't that difficult, as he seized control early and beat Carl Pettersson, 6 and 5.

"I would have been all right to beat Rory, but to lose in the second round is not what I want coming here

this week," Lowry said. "I wanted to go on. I feel like I could potentially do very well in this tournament."

Two more wins on Saturday and Lowry will qualify for the next WGC event at Doral in two weeks. But there will be only one Irishman left standing on Saturday. Next up for Lowry is Graeme McDowell of Northern Ireland, who outlasted Alex Noren of Sweden in 20 holes.

The other giant killer, Charles Howell III, wasn't so fortunate. Gonzalo Fernandez-Castano, who had to finish his 1-up win over Francesco Molinari in the morn-

ing, never lost a hole in a 6-and-5 win.

Howell, one day after beating Woods, didn't make a single birdie.

Defending champion Hunter Mahan had an easy time with Richard Sterne to win his eighth straight match, and next faces the last player to beat him in this event — Martin Kaymer, who defeated Rafael Cabrera Bello of Spain.

Of the 16 players remaining, the Americans and Europeans each have seven players still alive, with one each for South Africa (Tim Clark) and Australia (Day). □

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Danica brings new eyes to NASCAR and Daytona 500

JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Florida (AP) — The big boys brought their little girls to see NASCAR's shining star. Jeff Gordon, Carl Edwards and Jimmie Johnson all took their daughters to meet Danica Patrick this week at Daytona International Speedway.

It was the ultimate backstage pass.

Patrick dropped to one knee, wrapped her right arm around Ella Gordon's waist and posed for pictures as the 5-year-old flashed an endless grin in Victory Lane last week. Every day since, Patrick's crew has handed out dozens and dozens of lugnuts to little girls clamoring for souvenirs. Annie Edwards wore GoDaddy green shoes for the special occasion. Evie Johnson recognizes only two cars, her Dad said — his and the green one. "Carl was saying it's good that she sees me in real life and in person because 'To her, you are like some mythical creature that doesn't exist,'" Patrick said. "Then after qualifying, Jimmie Johnson brought his little girl over. That's three pretty big drivers who have little girls that wanted to meet me."

Danicamania is in full bloom at Daytona — and with a brand new audience. The first woman in history to earn the top starting spot in a race at NASCAR's elite Sprint Cup Series, Patrick will bring new eyeballs to Sunday's season-opening Daytona 500. She'll lure in casual sports fans, women who don't know a muffler from a manifold, and little girls in awe of the glamorous driver and her fast green car.

It's an ambassador role Patrick has played since her 2005 debut at the Indianapolis 500, where she became the first woman to lead laps in the biggest race in the world. But it's so much more now.

"You can only lead by example and I don't necessarily want my example to step outside the box and be a girl in a guy's world.



Daytona 500 pole sitter Danica Patrick, right, talks to crew chief Tony Gibson during a practice for the Daytona 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race Friday, Feb. 22, 2013, at the Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla. **Associated Press**

That's not what I am trying to say," Patrick said. "But if you have a talent for something, do not be afraid to follow through with it and not feel different. Do not feel like you are less qualified or less competent to be able to do the job because you are different. Ignore that and let it be about what your potential is." And right now, she believes her potential is to win "The Great American Race."

Patrick starts first on Sunday, next to four-time champion Gordon, and after running 32 laps in Friday's practice and mixing it up with NASCAR's biggest stars, she was more convinced than ever that she can be a player in the race.

"Can I win? Yeah. Absolutely," Patrick said. "I feel comfortable in this kind of race situation. I feel comfortable in the draft. I feel comfortable that the speeds are not a problem. I know I am inexperienced. I know I am rookie out there. I will do the best job I can to win. I do believe I have a chance to win. I do believe experience would help, but that doesn't mean I don't have a chance to win."

Crew chief Tony Gibson was even more convinced he's got a winner for Sunday. He was part of Derrike Cope's improbable 1990

victory, when Cope inherited the win when the late Dale Earnhardt blew a tire on the final lap.

"She has got the talent," Gibson said. "She's already proven in the Nationwide Series, from what I've seen on the speedway stuff, she definitely gets the respect. People know she's fast. She can draft. She knows how the air works. She gets a lot of that from IndyCar.

drivers never win it — it took seven-time champion Earnhardt 20 tries to finally get his lone win — and Tony Stewart, Patrick's teammate and car owner, goes into Sunday's race seeking his first victory in 15 tries. He's been quiet all week, except, of course, for the nine-car accident he started in an exhibition race last weekend. He lamented afterward, "That is



Danica Patrick climbs out of her car after her qualifying run for the NASCAR Nationwide auto race Friday, Feb. 22, 2013, at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla. **Associated Press**

So I have 100 percent confidence she can win the Daytona 500.

"I remember Derrike Cope, nobody gave him a chance, either, but I saw him in Victory Lane. I know it can be done."

But the Daytona 500 is a pressure-packed race unlike anything except the Indy 500. Some of the best

why I haven't won a Daytona 500 yet. I'm not quite sure exactly which move to make."

Don't be fooled, though, by the three-time NASCAR champion. Stewart might just like being out of the spotlight as he heads into one of the few races missing from his resume, and being the favorite for the

500 has never worked out for him before.

He wrapped up his practice with one final run Friday to test his race engine and wound up on top of the speed chart. It was Stewart's intention to sit out Saturday's final day of practice.

"I'm excited we've made it through the whole week without a scratch on the car," he said. "We are as ready as you can get for the 500. I feel like we've got a car capable of winning the race. It's just a matter of whether the driver does a good job with the steering wheel."

The title of favorite this year goes to Kevin Harvick, who has two wins in two races so far at Speedweeks. The driver has dominated in his Richard Childress Racing Chevrolet, led 63 of a possible 135 laps and didn't even bother to take the cover off his car in Friday's two practice sessions.

Harvick, the 2008 race winner, has come into the year with both focus and some inner peace after a pair of life-changing moments. His first child, son Keelan, was born after last July's race at Daytona. Then, in November, Harvick made the difficult decision to leave RCR after his 13th season with the organization that brought him into NASCAR and gave him his Cup ride the week after Earnhardt was killed in the 2001 Daytona 500.

He'll drive for Stewart next season at Stewart-Haas Racing, but is determined to make this last year with RCR count.

"Everybody is just working toward the same goal, that's winning the races," Harvick said. "We have to be professional anyway, whether it's lame duck or not. You can call it whatever you want. We're going to have a helluva lot of fun racing, having a good time, doing our jobs."

The 500 will be the first with a full 43-car field racing NASCAR's new Gen-6 car, which was designed all last season with input from teams, drivers and the manufacturers. □

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Hickey's OT goal lifts Isles over Canadiens 4-3

MONTREAL (AP) — New York Islanders rookie Thomas Hickey couldn't have scripted his first NHL goal any better.

The 23-year-old defenseman scored 3:12 into overtime to complete the Islanders' 4-3 come-from-behind victory over the Montreal Canadiens on Thursday night.

"Coming in today, this rink with all that history up in the rafters, I got goose bumps right away," said Hickey, the No. 4 pick in the 2007 NHL draft by the Los Angeles Kings. "It's a special place to score in overtime, and to get the win here, I couldn't be happier."

John Tavares started the winning play when he dished the puck to a streaking Michael Grabner, who found a pinching and open Hickey to the left of Montreal goalie Carey Price.

Hickey, picked up off waivers by the Islanders during training camp, figured out what to do next.

"I don't know what I was doing that far into the play, to be honest with you," Hickey said with a chuckle. "Most guys would have shot that. I don't know how

(Grabner) saw me, but I just had my stick on the ice and just swiped at it."

That was enough to end the Canadiens' five-game winning streak.

Matt Moulson scored twice and Frans Nielsen added a goal in the third period for the Islanders (7-9-1), who trailed 2-0 and 3-1 but came back to end a two-game slide and win for the third time in 10 games. Evgeni Nabokov made 30 saves for the victory.

Max Pacioretty had two goals, and Travis Moen added one for the Canadiens (11-4-2). Price stopped 21 shots.

After going his first 10 games without a goal, Pacioretty has four in three games.

Moen got things going 49 seconds into the game when Colby Armstrong took the puck from Islanders defenseman Andy MacDonald behind the net and fed a pass to Moen for his second of the season.

Pacioretty scored his first of the night on the power play at 11:02 of the first period. David Desharnais, stationed to the left of the crease, moved P.K. Subban's pass along to Pa-



Ottawa Senators goalie Craig Anderson is injured as New York Rangers left wing Chris Kreider slides into him during the third period of an NHL hockey game in Ottawa, Ontario, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013.

Associated Press

ciorretty at the inner hash marks of the right circle.

The Canadiens outshot the Islanders 14-3 in the opening period, marking the third straight game they have held their opponent below five shots in the first

20 minutes. Montreal also kept opponents below 10 shots in the first period of each game of its winning streak.

The Islanders got one back early in the second on a power play. Moulson de-

flected Mark Streit's point shot for his eighth goal of the season 34 seconds into the period.

"We weren't happy in here and we knew we had to be a lot better," said Tavares, who had two assists. "It just seemed that as the game went on we started to play better and started to make more happen."

"It's really been a struggle for us this year, starting off on the wrong foot. But it's a good way to battle back and know that we can do that. It's a big win in a tough environment, and they've been playing really well."

New York's play with the man advantage, which was tops on the road and fourth overall in the NHL heading into Thursday, has been a strength this season.

"Our power play has been there all year for us," Islanders coach Jack Capuano said. "The first one was a big one to get us on the board. Pacioretty restored Montreal's two-goal lead eight minutes later after a strong shift by his line. Working with Erik Cole behind the Islanders net, Desharnais found Pacioretty in the low slot at 8:30. □

points and Jamal Crawford 15 points as the Clippers' four-game winning streak ended in their first game after the All-Star break. □



San Antonio Spurs guard Tony Parker, left, of France, goes up for a shot as Los Angeles Clippers forward Blake Griffin defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press



US approves new targeted breast cancer drug

MATTHEW PERRONE

AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved a first-of-a-kind breast cancer medication that targets tumor cells while sparing healthy ones.

The drug Kadcyla from Roche combines the established drug Herceptin with a powerful chemotherapy drug and a third chemical linking the medicines together.

The chemical keeps the cocktail intact until it binds to a cancer cell, delivering a potent dose of anti-tumor poison.

Cancer researchers say the drug is an important step forward because it delivers more medication while reducing the unpleasant side effects of chemotherapy.

"This antibody goes seeking out the tumor cells, gets internalized and then explodes them from within. So it's very kind and gentle on the patients — there's no hair loss, no nausea, no vomiting," said Dr. Melody Cobleigh of Rush University Medical Center. "It's a revolutionary way of treating

cancer."

Cobleigh helped conduct the key studies of the drug at the Chicago facility. The FDA approved the new treatment for about 20 percent of breast can-

cancer is the second most deadly form of cancer in U.S. women, and is expected to kill more than 39,000 Americans this year, according to the National Cancer Institute.

year. Genentech said Friday that Kadcyla will cost \$9,800 per month, compared to \$4,500 per month for regular Herceptin. The company estimates a full

cer by several months. Researchers reported last year that patients treated with the drug lived 9.6 months before death or the spread of their disease, compared with a little more than six months for patients treated with two other standard drugs, Tykerb and Xeloda. Overall, patients taking Kadcyla lived about 2.6 years, compared with 2 years for patients taking the other drugs.

FDA specifically approved the drug for patients with advanced breast cancer who have already been treated with Herceptin and taxane, a widely used chemotherapy drug. Doctors are not required to follow FDA prescribing guidelines, and cancer researchers say the drug could have great potential in patients with earlier forms of breast cancer

Kadcyla will carry a boxed warning, the most severe type, alerting doctors and patients that the drug can cause liver toxicity, heart problems and potentially death. The drug can also cause severe birth defects and should not be used by pregnant women. □

ing healthy ones.

cer patients with a form of the disease that is typically more aggressive and less responsive to hormone therapy.

These patients have tumors that overproduce a protein known as HER-2. Breast

The approval will help Roche's Genentech unit build on the blockbuster success of Herceptin, which has long dominated the breast cancer marketplace. The drug had sales of roughly \$6 billion last

course of Kadcyla, about nine months of medicine, will cost \$94,000. FDA scientists said they approved the drug based on company studies showing Kadcyla delayed the progression of breast can-

(AP Photo/Roche)

US probes J&J on recalled hip implant marketing

LINDA A. JOHNSON

AP Business Writer

TRENTON, New Jersey (AP)

— U.S. prosecutors are investigating Johnson & Johnson's practices in marketing a line of hip replacements recalled in 2010 because many had to be replaced within a few years — part of a string of more than 30 product recalls by the health care giant in the last 3 1/2 years.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Massachusetts and the Civil Division of the U.S. Justice Department last August sent Johnson & Johnson an "informal request" for information about its ASR hip replacements, J&J reported in a regulatory filing Friday. Just last week, Johnson & Johnson issued a recall on a different line of its hip implants, the "Adept" brand all-metal total hip replacement system, also because

a higher-than-expected percentage of one part of them had to be replaced. A patient registry in the United Kingdom found about 12 percent of people who had gotten those joints needed them replaced within seven years.

In Australia, a registry showed 7 percent of patients needed replacements in just three years. The company's annual report to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission states that the government has asked for additional documents from DePuy Synthes and two related subsidiaries.

They have turned over the documents and are cooperating fully with investigators, the filing states. DePuy Synthes is one of the world's biggest makers of joint replacements, surgical trauma equipment and

other orthopedic surgery products.

The filing didn't specify what the government is looking for, but J&J has had legal problems before over its artificial joints.

Just days before the ASR systems were recalled, the Food and Drug Administration told DePuy to stop marketing its Corail Hip System for two unapproved uses. And in 2007, J&J agreed to pay \$84.7 million in fines as part of a settlement of a sweeping investigation by the Justice Department into alleged kickbacks. J&J and the four other top U.S. makers of replacement hips and knees were accused of paying surgeons to get them to use their products exclusively, from at least 2002 through 2006. DePuy recalled two artificial joint systems — the ASR Hip Resurfacing System

and the ASR XL Acetabular System — in August 2010 because of unexpectedly high rates of failure. That means they caused pain and difficulty walking because they no longer fit perfectly,

or that tiny pieces of metal had flaked off inside the patient's body, allegedly causing immune system problems in some people. More than 90,000 of systems were recalled in the U.S. and other countries.

That was part of an embarrassing spate of J&J recalls of artificial joints, contact lenses, prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines that began in September 2009. Reasons range from contamination with bacteria and incorrect levels of a drug's active ingredient to a nauseating smell on

containers and liquid medicines that may contain tiny metal shavings.

Lost product sales and expensive, ongoing factory upgrades have cost the company, based in New Brunswick, New Jersey, well over \$1 billion.

Artificial joint systems, made of high-tech metals, plastics or ceramic, replace deteriorated joints causing severe pain and limiting mobility, usually in older folks with advanced arthritis.

Hip replacement parts include the top of the thigh bone, the ball atop that and a plate lining the hip socket.

They're generally expected to last at least 10 to 20 years. In the case of the recalled DePuy ASR hip systems, one in eight patients needed theirs replaced within five years. □

Scientists use 3-D printing to help grow an ear

LAURAN NEERGAARD

AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Printing out body parts? Cornell University researchers showed it is possible by creating a replacement ear using a 3-D printer and injections of living cells. The work reported Wednesday is a first step toward one day growing customized new ears for children born with malformed ones, or people who lose one to accident or disease.

It's part of the hot field of tissue regeneration, trying to regrow all kinds of body parts. Scientists hope using 3-D printing technology might offer a speedier method with more lifelike results.

If it pans out, "this enables us to rapidly customize implants for whoever needs them," said Cornell biomedical engineer Lawrence Bonassar, who co-authored the research published online in the journal PLoS One.

This first-step work crafted a human-shaped ear that grew with cartilage from a cow, easier to obtain than human cartilage, especially the uniquely flexible kind that makes up ears. Study co-author Dr. Jason Spec-

tor of Weill Cornell Medical Center is working on the next step — how to cultivate enough of a child's remaining ear cartilage in the lab to grow an entirely new ear that could be implanted in the right spot. Wednesday's report is "a nice advancement," said Dr. Anthony Atala, director of the Institute for Regenerative Medicine at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, who wasn't involved in the new research.

Three-dimensional printers, which gradually layer materials to form shapes, are widely used in manufacturing. For medicine, Atala said the ear work is part of broader research that shows "the technology now is at the point where we can in fact print these 3-dimensional structures and they do become functional over time."

Today, people who need a new ear often turn to prosthetics that require a rod to fasten to the head. For children, doctors sometimes fashion a new ear from the stiffer cartilage surrounding ribs, but it's a big operation. Spector said the end result seldom looks completely natural. Hence the quest to use a

patient's own cells to grow a replacement ear.

The Cornell team started with a 3-D camera that rapidly rotates around a child's head for a picture of the existing ear to match. It beams the ear's geometry into a computer, without the mess of a traditional mold or the radiation if CT scans were used to measure ear anatomy. "Kids aren't afraid of it," said Bonassar, who used his then-5-year-old twin daughters' healthy ears as models.

From that image, the 3-D printer produced a soft mold of the ear. Bonassar injected it with a special collagen gel that's full of cow cells that produce cartilage — forming a scaffolding. Over the next few weeks, cartilage grew to replace the collagen. At three months, it appeared to be a flexible and workable outer ear, the study concluded.

Now Bonassar's team can do the process even faster by using the living cells in that collagen gel as the printer's "ink." The 3-D technology directly layers the gel into just the right ear shape for cartilage to cover, without having to



This handout photo provided by Cornell University, taken Feb. 13, 2013, shows Cornell University biomedical engineer Lawrence Bonassar holding the scaffolding for an ear his laboratory is creating using a 3-D printer and cartilage-producing cells.

Associated Press

make a mold first.

The next step is to use a patient's own cells in the 3-D printing process. Spector, a reconstructive surgeon, is focusing on children born without a fully developed external ear, a condition called microtia. They have some ear cartilage-producing cells in that tissue, just not enough. So he's experimenting with ways to

boost those cells in the lab, "so we can grow enough of them from that patient to make an ear," he explained.

That hurdle aside, cartilage may be the tissue most amenable to growing with the help of 3-D printing technology, he said. That's because cartilage doesn't need blood vessels growing inside it to survive. □



Christopher Jacques, 22, uses his index finger to pay for an Italian soda at a coffee shop at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology on Feb. 15, 2013.

Associated Press

AMBER HUNT

Associated Press

RAPID CITY, South Dakota

(AP) — Futurists have long proclaimed the coming of a cashless society, where paper currency and plastic cards are replaced by fingerprint and retina scanners smart enough to distinguish a living, breathing

account holder from an identity thief.

What they probably didn't see coming was that one such technology, patented by a Spanish company, would make its debut not in Silicon Valley but at a small college in remote South Dakota.

Two shops on the School

U.S. college tests fingerprint purchasing technology

of Mines and Technology campus are performing one of the world's first experiments in Biocryptology — a mix of biometrics (using physical traits for identification) and cryptology (the study of encoding private information).

Students can buy a bag of potato chips with a machine that non-intrusively detects their hemoglobin to make sure the transaction is legitimate.

Researchers figure their technology would provide a critical safeguard against a morbid scenario sometimes found in spy movies in which a thief removes someone else's finger to fool the scanner.

On a recent Friday, student Bernard Keeler handed a Red Bull to a cashier in the Miner's Shack campus shop, typed his birthdate into a pay pad and swiped his finger.

Within seconds, the machine had identified his print and checked that blood was pulsing beneath it, allowing him to make the purchase. Afterward, Keeler proudly showed off the receipt he was sent via email on his smartphone.

Fingerprint technology isn't new, nor is the general concept of using biometrics as a way to pay for goods. But it's the extra layer of protection — that deeper check to ensure the finger has a pulse —

that researchers say sets this technology apart from already existing digital fingerprint scans, which are used mostly for criminal background checks.

Al Maas, president of Nexus USA — a subsidiary of Spanish-based Hanscan Identity Management, which patented the technology — acknowledged South Dakota might seem an unlikely locale to test it, but to him, it was a perfect fit.

"I said, if it flies here in the conservative Midwest, it's going to go anywhere," Maas said.

Maas grew up in South Dakota and wanted his home state to be the technology's test site. □

HP's 1Q offers glimmer of hope, stock surges

MICHAEL LIEDTKE
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Hewlett-Packard Co.'s latest quarterly results have provided a glimmer of hope after months of gloomy news.

The fiscal first-quarter numbers announced Thursday topped what the slumping personal computer maker's own management and stock market analysts had forecast. Like other PC makers, HP has been struggling to adapt to a shift toward smartphones and tablet computers, which are siphoning sales from desktop and laptop machines made by HP and other companies. Adding to the problems were some acquisitions gone awry. Over the past two quarters, HP announced losses totaling \$15.3 billion as the company accounted for those mishaps, to the shock of Wall Street. The jolt caused HP's stock to plunge to its lowest price in a decade just three months ago.

The shares have rebounded since then, though they

still remain about 20 percent below where they were in Sept. 2011, when the company fired Leo Apotheker as its CEO and hired Meg Whitman, who became a high-tech star while running eBay Inc.'s online marketplace.

The same problems are still plaguing HP, but signs of progress in the latest quarter indicated that the company's turnaround efforts are running ahead of schedule. Whitman has consistently said it may be several years before HP is on solid ground again.

She said the company is in the best condition since she was hired as CEO. "The patient showed some improvement," Whitman told The Associated Press in a Thursday interview.

She stopped short of predicting HP will be fully cured more quickly than she anticipated. "I don't want to get out over my skis," Whitman said. In a show of confidence, HP provided an earnings forecast for the Feb.-April quarter that was higher than analysts' pro-

jections. The company's stock rose 94 cents, or 5.5 percent, to \$18.04 in after-hours trading. At its recent low, the stock was down to \$11.35. HP earned \$1.2 billion, or 63 cents per share, in the three months ending Jan. 31. That was a 16 percent decrease from nearly \$1.5 billion, or 73 cents per share, at the same time a year earlier. Excluding certain accounting items, HP would have earned 82 cents per share. That was well above the average estimate of 71 cents per share among analysts surveyed by FactSet.

Revenue fell 6 percent to \$28.4 billion, about \$470 million above analysts' projections. It was nearly \$30 billion a year earlier. It's the sixth consecutive quarter that HP's revenue has dropped from the previous year. Excluding one-time items, HP expects to earn 80 to 82 cents per share in the current quarter. Analysts estimated earnings of 77 cents per share.

HP isn't predicting when its revenue downturn might

end. In a conference call with analysts, Whitman said HP still faces a "long road ahead" before its revenue is growing again. To help offset the revenue decline, HP is in the process of eliminating 29,000 jobs, or about 8 percent of the workforce when it was announced, in a streamlining scheduled to be completed by Oct. 2014. Whitman said about 15,300 of the jobs targeted in the cost-cutting program have been jettisoned so far. About 3,500 people left in the most recent quarter. The Palo Alto, California, company's biggest headaches remain rooted in the HP division that includes PCs, where revenue fell 8 percent from the previous year. Printer sales also continued to slide, although not quite as severely, with a 5 percent decrease.

Whitman is trying to reverse the trend by expanding into tablet computers and selling an array of machines running on Windows 8, a radical redesign of Microsoft's widely used operating system. □

AIG slides to a loss, hurt by Sandy crisis

ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writer

American International Group lost \$4 billion in the last three months of 2012 as the insurer absorbed costs related to damage caused by Superstorm Sandy and the sale of its airplane leasing unit.

AIG posted an operating profit that was better than analysts were expecting, however, and its stock rose in after-hours trading. It was the first financial report for the bailed-out insurer since the government sold off the last of its stake in the company in December.

The New York-based company became a household name after it received a \$182 billion bailout package from the government at the height of the financial crisis in 2008. The company nearly imploded by making huge bets on mortgage investments that later went wrong.

Last month the company refused to join a lawsuit being brought against the U.S. government by its former CEO Maurice "Hank" Greenberg. The lawsuit claimed that the terms of the taxpayer-funded bailout were too onerous.

AIG has repaid the government's bailout funds over the years. It has also undergone a massive restructuring that cut its size in half as it turned its focus to its core business of writing insurance.

For the three months ended Dec. 31, AIG reported a loss of \$4 billion, or \$2.68 per share. That compares with net income of \$21.5 billion, or \$11.31 per share, in the prior-year quarter, when AIG benefited from a tax-related accounting gain of \$19.2 billion.

AIG's property casualty segment bore the brunt of the impact from losses related to Superstorm Sandy, which made landfall on Oct. 29, spreading a swath of devastation that affected New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and eight other states. □

Volkswagen earnings up 41 percent in 2012

BERLIN (AP) — German automaker Volkswagen AG said Friday its net profit increased 41 percent for 2012, but earnings fell a little short of analysts' expectations and the company issued a cautious forecast for this year. Full-year earnings rose to €21.7 billion (\$28.7 billion) from €15.4 billion the previous year; analysts surveyed by FactSet had expected them to come in just above €22 billion. Earnings were boosted last year in part by an accounting boost from the complex deal that made Porsche one of Volkswagen's 12 brands.

Revenues were up 21 percent, rising to €192.7 billion from €159.3 billion. The number of vehicles delivered worldwide last year by the group topped 9 million for the first time, rising 12.2 percent to nearly 9.3 million as growing demand in North America and Asia offset more sluggish sales in

Europe, where many countries are in recession. The company said it expects revenue and deliveries to customers to exceed last year's level in 2013 but that, "given the ongoing

uncertainty in the economic environment," its aim is to match the 2012 level of operating profit.

Last year's operating profit came in at €11.5 billion, a 2.1 percent increase

over 2011. Volkswagen proposed raising the dividend on ordinary shares to €3.50 from the previous year's €3.00 and on preferred shares to €3.56 from €3.06. □



The Volkswagen Dealership on Aruba. German automaker Volkswagen AG said Friday its net profit increased 41 percent for 2012, but earnings fell a little short of analysts' expectations and the company issued a cautious forecast for this year.

(PR Photo)

Dow bounces from 2-day slide to a 3-digit gain

DANIEL WAGNER
AP Business Writer

Strong earnings from big U.S. companies pushed the Dow Jones industrial average to a rare triple-digit gain Friday, but the S&P 500 index still posted its first weekly loss of the year. Hewlett-Packard had the biggest gain in the Dow and the Standard & Poor's 500 index.

It posted fiscal first-quarter earnings late Thursday that beat all forecasts, a relief after months of bad news for the computer maker. H-P rose \$2.10, or 12.3 percent, to \$19.20.

Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. was the S&P 500's second-best performer, jumping a day after reporting earnings that beat analysts' expectations. It rose \$5.95, or 11.1 percent, to \$59.81.

American International Group Inc. rose after its fourth-quarter operating results exceeded analysts' forecasts.

The company's net loss was \$4 billion, mainly because of claims related to Superstorm Sandy, in the first full quarter after it finished repaying its \$182 billion government bailout. AIG rose \$1.17, or 3.1 percent, to \$38.45.

The Dow closed up 119.95 points, or 0.9 percent, at 14,000.57—its third-biggest gain this year. The S&P 500 rose 13.18 points, also 0.9 percent, to 1,515.60. The Nasdaq composite index

rose 30.33, or 1 percent, to 3,161.82.

The S&P 500 and Nasdaq closed slightly lower for the week, while the Dow edged higher.

Bill Stone, chief investment strategist with PNC Wealth Management, said he expects stocks to hold up despite this week's volatility.

"You're going to get bumps and bruises along the way, but we do believe things are actually getting better, so I think there's underlying demand" for stocks, Stone said.

Spooked investors sent stocks plunging Wednesday after minutes from the Federal Reserve's latest policy meeting revealed disagreement over how long to keep buying bonds in an effort to boost the economy. The slide contin-

ued Thursday. The Dow lost 155 points over those two days.

Many analysts say the Fed's

which lifted indexes to their highest levels since before the 2008 financial crisis. The Dow is now just 164 points

U.S. stocks followed European stocks higher after a survey of German business optimism rose sharply, adding to evidence that the country will avoid a recession.

Germany's economic vitality is crucial for the beleaguered region, offsetting economic contraction in surrounding countries.

"Germany is really the bedrock," Stone said. "If it gives way, then you have real problems."

France's CAC-40 closed up 2.2 percent, Germany's DAX 1 percent.

Among other stocks moving on corporate news:

— Abercrombie & Fitch sank after a key sales metric declined in the all-important holiday quarter. The stock fell \$2.19, or 4.5 percent, to \$46.86. □



Sibanye Gold CEO Neal Froneman, third from left, and Chairman Sello Moloko, center, ring the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013.

(AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

bond-buying and resulting low interest rates have driven this year's stock rally,

below its record close of 14,164 reached in October 2007.

Gold prices slide for 3rd straight week

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Gold prices fell for a third week running, as traders speculated that the Federal Reserve will ease off its support for the economy.

Gold for April delivery fell \$5.80 on Friday to settle at \$1,572.80 an ounce.

The price of gold dropped below \$1,600 on Wednesday for the first time since August,

after details from the Fed's last meeting revealed that some Fed officials dis-

cussed ending its bond-buying program sooner than planned.

Gold prices have fallen 11 percent this year, largely because investors' biggest fears have dissipated, said James Steel, chief commodities analyst at HSBC in New York.

In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, gold prices climbed as the Fed and central banks around the world sliced interest rates to support economic growth. Low interest rates tend to

draw traders to gold. Any sign that central banks are considering removing their support "triggers a knee-jerk selling in the gold market," Steel said.

Prices for most other metals were lower Friday. Silver for May fell 24.1 cents to \$28.52 an ounce. Platinum for April fell \$12.60 to settle at \$1,607.40. Copper for May fell 1.9 cents to \$3.5505 per pound.

Palladium was the exception. Contracts for March edged up \$1.70 to \$735.30

an ounce.

Grain prices fell.

Wheat dropped 5.25 cents to \$7.1875 a bushel, while corn fell half a penny to \$6.9025 a bushel.

Soybeans fell 26.5 cents to \$14.6125 per bushel.

In oil and gas futures, crude prices were little changed Friday after two days of steep losses.

Benchmark crude for April delivery rose 29 cents to finish at \$93.13 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. □

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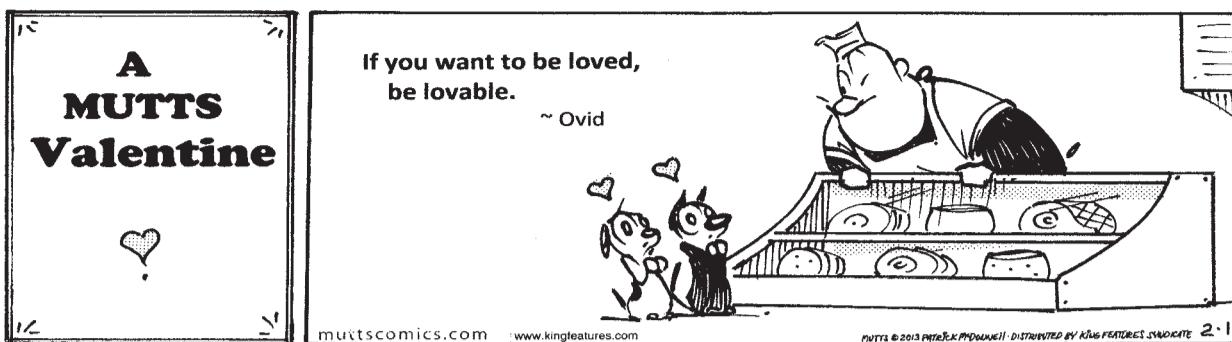
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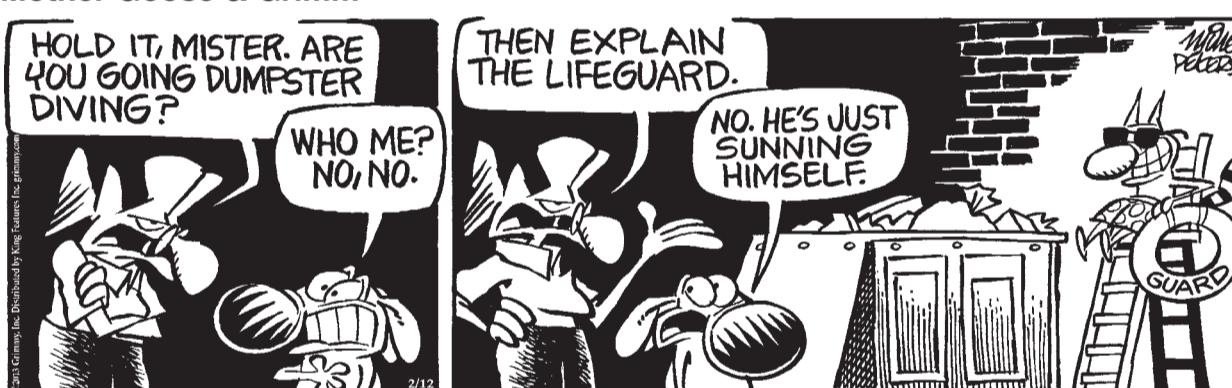
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Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

		9	1	4										
9					6									
5				3		2								
4							9							
2		6	1	8	5	7		3						
5									2					
6					5					3				
2						4								
8	7	6												

Difficulty Level ★★

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2/12

4	5	9	6	7	3	8	2	1						
8	3	2	1	9	5	6	4	7						
7	6	1	8	2	4	5	9	3						
6	2	3	5	8	9	1	7	4						
5	8	4	2	1	7	3	6	9						
9	1	7	3	4	6	2	5	8						
1	9	8	7	5	2	4	3	6						
3	4	5	9	6	8	7	1	2						
2	7	6	4	3	1	9	8	5						

Yesterday's puzzle answer

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 2/12/13

Monday's Puzzle Solved

DAVIS	SPAN	PESO
AGENT	KALE	EVIL
MENSA	ILLIS	NEED
ESTIMATE	TWINGE	
DIES	FLATTER	
PREENS	IRENE	
LAW	AORTA	ENACT
USER	POEMS	TILE
SHRED	AMEND	DUN
GUESS	ERASED	
EERIE	ST	KEEN
BLASTS	PARAGONS	
BUNT	AWAY	MOVIE
EDGE	YOGA	ERECT
DEER	SEEK	RANKS

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- 4 Furious
5 Fine sprays
6 Notice
7 Heavyweight
8 Muhammad
9 Of the period before Easter
10 Beer mug
11 Overindulgent parent
12 Gel just one's feet wet
13 Examination
14 Ordinance
15 Goes out with
16 Cattleman
17 Hackneyed from overuse, as a cliché
18 Mechanical man
19 Actress Leoni
20 Farned English racecourse
21 Nurse's assistant
22 Stop
23 High-strung
24 Split __ soup
25 "The Farmer in the __"
26 Play a guitar
27 See eye to eye
28 Skeptic's retort
29 " __ who? ",
30 Make a mess at the table
31 Morning's end
32 Nurse's assistant
33 High-strung
34 Split __ soup
35 " __ who? ",
36 Fast plane
37 Stacks
38 Soil turner
39 Umbrella
40 Takes tiny bites
41 Adjusting a piano
42 Uncommon
43 School subj.
44 Celebration
45 Peru's capital
46 TV show award
47 Vagrant
48 Cuban dance
49 Use bad words
50 Bodies of water
51 Up; bound
52 Uncommon
53 School subj.
54 Celebration
55 Peru's capital
56 TV show award
57 Bodies of water
58 Prius or Lexus

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Guilty plea in evading child support
MOSI SECRET
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A man who owed more than \$1 million in child support and was labeled the nation's most-wanted deadbeat parent by federal authorities pleaded guilty on Thursday to traveling across state lines and overseas to avoid making his child-support payments. The man, Robert D. Sand, 50, a father of three, told a judge in U.S. District Court in Central Islip, on Long Island, that he had left New York to avoid making payments and fled the country after warrants for his arrest were issued in 2000 and 2002. Sand spent much of the last year in Thailand as the amount he owed climbed above \$1.2 million. Sand was arrested in the Philippines in November and was deported and

sent to Los Angeles, where U.S. marshals arrested him. He faces a maximum sentence of four years. His guilty plea was a victory for the inspector general's office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which takes on child-support cases from local authorities when parents in arrears flee. The department compiles a "Most Wanted Deadbeat" list, on which Sands was featured. Sand's debt dates to 1995, when a judge in Nassau County ordered him to pay \$750 per week, an amount the court later raised to \$995 per week to account for cost-of-living increases. He and Lisa Sand had been married for nearly 10 years, living well on Sand's \$500,000 to \$600,000 yearly earnings from a car-auction business, according to court documents. □

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 Feb. 23 Dr. Algera
 Feb. 24 Dr. v/d Linde

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NOORD	587-0009
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Nature follows a number pattern called Fibonacci

LEE REICH

Associated Press

What do pine cones and paintings have in common? A 13th century Italian mathematician named Leonardo of Pisa.

Better known by his pen name, Fibonacci, he came up with a number sequence that keeps popping up throughout the plant kingdom, and the art world too.

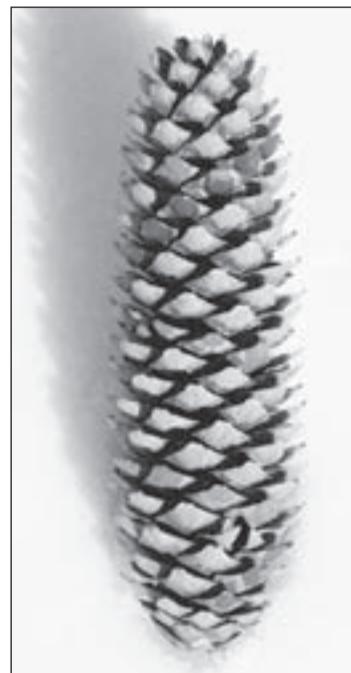
A fibonacci sequence is simple enough to generate: Starting with the number one, you merely add the previous two numbers in the sequence to generate the next one. So the sequence, early on, is 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21 and so on.

NUMBERS AND PLANTS

To see how it works in nature, go outside and find an intact pine cone (or any other cone). Look carefully and you'll notice that the bracts that make up the cone are arranged in a spiral. Actually two spirals, running in opposite directions, with one rising steeply and the other gradually from the cone's base to its tip.

Count the number of spirals in each direction — a job made easier by dabbing the bracts along one line of each spiral with a colored marker. The number of spirals in either direction is a fibonacci number. I just counted 5 parallel spirals going in one direction and 8 parallel spirals going in the opposite direction on a Norway spruce cone.

Or you might examine a pineapple. Focus on one of the hexagonal scales near the fruit's midriff and you can pick out three spirals, each aligned to a different pair of opposing sides of the hexagon. One set rises gradually, another moder-



This undated photo shows a spruce cone with a marked fibonacci number sequence. A numbers sequence thought up by the 13th century Italian mathematician known as Fibonacci plays out in plants, from pine cones to pineapples.

Associated Press

ately and the third steeply. Count the number of spirals and you'll find eight gradual, 13 moderate and 21 steeply rising ones. Fibonacci numbers again.

Scales and bracts are modified leaves, and the spiral arrangements in pine cones and pineapples reflect the spiral growth habit of stems. To confirm this, bring in a leafless stem from some tree or shrub and look at its buds, where leaves were attached. The buds range up the stem in a spiral pattern, which kept each leaf out of the shadow of leaves just above it. The amount of spiraling varies from plant to plant, with new leaves developing in some fraction — such as 2/5, 3/5, 3/8 or 8/13 — of a spiral. Eureka, the numbers in those fractions are fibo-

nacci numbers!

You can determine the fraction on your dormant stem by finding a bud directly above another one, then counting the number of full circles the stem went through to get there while generating buds in between.

So if the stems made three full circles to get a bud back where it started and generated eight buds getting there, the fraction is 3/8, with each bud 3/8 of a turn off its neighbor upstairs or downstairs.

Different plants have favored fractions, but they evidently don't read the books because I just computed fractions of 1/3 and 3/8 on a single apple stem, which is supposed to have

a fraction of 2/5. All are fractions with fibonacci numbers, at least.

NUMBERS AND ART

I haven't forgotten about the artists. It turns out there are certain proportions we humans generally find pleasing: the rectangular proportions of a painting, for example, or the placement of a focal point in a painting.

In a painting, for example, the Golden Cut states that the ratio of the distance of the focal point from the closer side to the farther side of a painting is the same as the ratio of the distance from the farther side to the painting's whole width. A pleasing ratio, it turns out, is 0.618... or, if you want to use the inverse,

1.618... Enter fibonacci: Divide any fibonacci number by the fibonacci number before or after it and you get 0.618... or 1.618..., not exactly at first, but closer and closer the higher the fibonacci number you start with. Try it.

For a good visual explanation of fibonacci in nature, visit <http://allbleedingstops.blogspot.com/2012/01/spirals-and-fibonacci-series-and-pine.html>.

For more about basic fibonacci, try the books "Fascinating Fibonacci: Mystery and Magic in Numbers" and Trudi Hammel Garland's "Fibonacci Fun: Fascinating Activities with Intriguing Numbers" (both from Dale Seymour Publications). □

T. rex not a stand-up guy? Test your dino skills

MALCOLM RITTER

AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Here's a test of your dinosaur knowledge: Did Tyrannosaurus rex stand upright, with its tail on the ground?

The answer: No. But a lot of young people seem to think so, and the authors of a study are blaming toys like Barney and other pop influences for that misconception.

Scientists used to think T. rex stood tall, but they abandoned that idea decades ago. Now, the ferocious dinosaur is depicted in a bird-like posture, tail in the air and head pitched forward of its two massive legs.

The change led major museums to update their T. rex displays, study authors said, and popular books have largely gotten the posture right since around 1990. So did the "Jurassic Park" movies.

But when the researchers



This combination of 2011 and 2003 file photos shows Barney the Dinosaur, left, in Chicago and a Tyrannosaurus Rex model outside the Museum of Science in Boston. Associated Press

asked college students and children to draw a T. rex, most gave it an upright posture instead. Why? They'd soaked up the wrong idea from toys like Barney, games and other pop culture items, the researchers conclude.

"It doesn't matter what they see in science books

or even in 'Jurassic Park,'" says Warren Allmon, a paleontology professor at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, and an author of the study.

It struck him when he saw a box of dinosaur chicken nuggets at a grocery store. If the explanation is correct, Allmon said, it's a sobering reminder of how people can get wrong ideas about science. The study will be published in the Journal of Geoscience Education.

The authors examined 316 T. rex drawings made by students at Ithaca College and children who visited an Ithaca museum. □

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Tyler, Perry lead Songwriters Hall of Fame class

CHRIS TALBOTT

AP Music Writer

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP)

— The Songwriters Hall of Fame is saluting 1970s and '80s rock 'n' roll with its 2013 induction class.

Joe Perry and Steven Tyler of Aerosmith and Mick Jones and Lou Gramm of Foreigner will join the hall of fame this year along with the writers of iconic rock hits "Love Is a Battlefield" and "Heartache Tonight." The ceremony will be June 13 in New York.

Aerosmith and Foreigner will get the attention, but inductees Holly Knight, JD Souther and Tony Hatch also have distinguished careers that helped define the sound of rock 'n' roll.

Knight wrote anthemic hits "Love Is a Battlefield" and "Invincible" for Pat Benatar and "The Warrior" for Patty Smyth. She also wrote several songs for Tina Turner, including "The Best" and



This Nov. 2, 2012 file photo shows Steven Tyler, left, and Joe Perry of Aerosmith on NBC's "Today" show in New York.

Associated Press

"Better Be Good to Me," that became standards for the star.

Souther, who has a role on the music-inspired television show "Nashville," had

a partnership with The Eagles that spawned several hits, including "Heartache Tonight," "Victim of Love," "New Kid in Town" and "Best of My Love."

Hatch made his mark during the British invasion, teaming with Petula Clark on hits like "Downtown" and "My Love" that helped shaped the future of pop

music.

Perry and Tyler have survived a sometimes contentious relationship to become one of rock's most successful songwriting teams over the last 40 years. The Rock and Roll Hall of Famers, staples of classic rock radio and pop culture icons, are known for hits like "Sweet Emotion," "Dream On" and "Livin' on the Edge," and released their 15th studio album last year.

Jones and Gramm are contemporaries of Perry and Tyler who also ruled radio for a time, but they sometimes came at it from a different angle. They could lay down a straight-up rocker like "Jukebox Hero" or "Feels Like the First Time." But they also could slow it down with hits like "I Wanna Know What Love Is" and "Cold as Ice" that helped foreshadow the ballad-driven rock of the late 1980s. □

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Kevin Costner poses after receiving a Cesar of honor, during the 38th French Cesar Awards Ceremony, in Paris, Friday Feb. 22, 2013.

Associated Press

Amour, Argo win acclaim at French film awards

PARIS (AP) — "Amour" and "Argo" are taking home prestigious prizes — and Kevin Costner may be taking home a horse — after a French film award ceremony.

The Cesar awards on Friday night reflected excitement and emotion ahead of the Oscars on Sunday. But they had a decidedly French touch, replete with references to high taxes.

The story of a woman's Alzheimer's and her hus-

band's devotion, Michael Haneke's "Amour" won best film, best director — and best actress and actor prizes for its octogenarian stars, Emmanuelle Riva and Jean-Louis Trintignant. "Argo," about Americans taken hostage in Iran, won the best foreign film award. Costner said "merci" over and over again for a lifetime achievement award. He was even offered a horse, amid jokes about a horse meat scandal engulfing Europe. □

Justin Timberlake and Jay-Z announce joint tour

NEW YORK (AP) — Justin Timberlake and Jay-Z are hitting the road together. The performers announced Friday that they'll embark on a 12-city stadium tour that will kick off July 17 in Toronto. "Legends of the Summer" will wrap up Aug. 16 in Miami.

Stops on the tour also include New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston.

Jay-Z is featured on Timberlake's comeback single, "Suit & Tie." Timberlake's new album, "The 20/20 Experience," will be released March 19. □



This Feb. 10, 2013 file photo shows recording artists Justin Timberlake, left, and Jay-Z performing at the 55th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Oscar guy MacFarlane aims to perk up stodgy awards



This June 16, 2012 photo shows Seth MacFarlane posing for a portrait at The Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif. Early reviews for Seth MacFarlane's Oscar-hosting skills are very positive.

Associated Press

DAVID GERMAIN
AP Movie Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — You think the Academy Awards are boring? Try the nominations. They only last a few minutes, but it's generally a sleepy academy suit and a sleepy starlet drowsing a list of names at 5:30 in the morning. Except last time. Some baby-faced guy took the stage, advised people who don't know him to pretend he's Donny Osmond, then stood beside sleepy starlet Emma Stone and cut loose with this line about best-picture nominee "Amour": "I read 'Amour' was co-produced in Austria and Germany, right? The last time Austria and Germany got together and co-produced something, it was Hitler."

For good or bad, Oscar host Seth MacFarlane already has enlivened the awards scene. As emcee of a broadcast notorious for its predictability and geezer audience, MacFarlane may bring a cheekiness that prods younger viewers to check out the Oscars just to see what he might pull. But given his Hit-

ler wisecrack, just how far will MacFarlane push it?

"It's a balance between not being completely dismissive of the ceremony, but at the same time, injecting a little bit of a lighter sensibility than maybe we've seen in the past," said MacFarlane, the impudent creator of "Family Guy" and last summer's potty-mouthed blockbuster "Ted." "The Oscars does have a history of taking itself so deadly seriously. And while it obviously is a ceremony that's important to the people involved, you know we're not curing cancer here."

So if there's any subtle reminder that I'll try to inject into the show tonally, it would be that."

The most-beloved Oscar hosts — Billy Crystal, Johnny Carson, Bob Hope — are those who play it safe while managing to poke gentle fun at Hollywood, the awards and the nominees. With TV ratings generally declining over the last few decades, Oscar overseers have tried shaking things up, trying out new hosts and different ways of handing out prizes.

The results have been mixed. Jon Stewart and Ellen DeGeneres earned polite praise as Oscar hosts. Chris Rock ruffled feathers with a few tart jabs but was mostly respectful. Hugh Jackman was charming and energetic, while Steve Martin and Alec Baldwin were an able team as dual hosts.

Another duo, Anne Hathaway and James Franco, were brought in two years ago to court young viewers. Hathaway was cute and perky, but Franco seemed to sleepwalk through the show. So last year, Oscar organizers lured back old stand-by Crystal, the most-popular among hosts of recent years.

The show's audience has inched up from its all-time low five years ago, when 32 million people watched the Oscars. But ratings remain well below the Oscar heyday of decades ago, and no matter who's the host, the show has never been able to shed its image as a marathon broadcast where rich and famous people hand out trophies to other rich and famous people. □

Raise That Wage



PAUL KRUGMAN
© 2013 New York Times

President Barack Obama laid out a number of good ideas in his State of the Union address. Unfortunately, almost all of them would require spending money – and given Republican control of the House of Representatives, it's hard to imagine that happening. One major proposal, however, wouldn't involve budget outlays: the president's call for a rise in the minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$9, with subsequent increases in line with inflation. The question we need to ask is: Would this be good policy? And the answer, perhaps surprisingly, is a clear yes.

Why "somewhat surprisingly"? Well, Economics 101 tells us to be very cautious about attempts to legislate market outcomes. Every textbook – mine included – lays out the unintended consequences that flow from policies like rent controls or agricultural price supports. And even most liberal economists would, I suspect, agree that setting a minimum wage of, say, \$20 an hour would create a lot of problems. But that's not what's on the table. And there are strong reasons to believe that the kind of minimum wage increase the president is proposing would have overwhelmingly positive effects. First of all, the current level of the minimum wage is very low by any reasonable standard. For about four decades, increases in the minimum wage have consistently fallen behind inflation, so that in real terms the minimum wage is substantially lower than it was in the 1960s. Meanwhile, worker productivity has doubled. Isn't it time for a raise?

Now, you might argue that even if the current minimum wage seems low, raising it would cost jobs. But there's evidence on that question – lots and lots of evidence, because the minimum wage is one of the most studied issues in all of economics. U.S. experience, it turns out, offers many "natural experiments" here, in which one state raises its minimum wage while others do not. And while there are dissenters, as there always are, the great preponderance of the evidence from these natural experiments points to little if any negative effect of minimum wage increases on employment.

Why is this true? That's a subject of continuing research, but one theme in all the explanations is that workers aren't bushels

of wheat or even Manhattan apartments; they're human beings, and the human relationships involved in hiring and firing are inevitably more complex than markets for mere commodities. And one byproduct of this human complexity seems to be that modest increases in wages for the least-paid don't necessarily reduce the number of jobs.

What this means, in turn, is that the main effect of a rise in minimum wages is a rise in the incomes of hardworking but low-paid Americans – which is, of course, what we're trying to accomplish.

Finally, it's important to understand how the minimum wage interacts with other policies aimed at helping lower-paid workers, in particular the earned-income tax credit, which helps low-income families who help themselves. The tax credit – which has traditionally had bipartisan support, although that may be ending – is also good policy. But it has a well-known defect: Some of its benefits end up flowing not to workers but to employers, in the form of lower wages. And guess what? An increase in the minimum wage helps correct this defect. It turns out that the tax credit and the minimum wage aren't competing policies, they're complementary policies that work best in tandem.

So Obama's wage proposal is good economics. It's also good politics: a wage increase is supported by an overwhelming majority of voters, including a strong majority of self-identified Republican women (but not men). Yet GOP leaders in Congress are opposed to any rise. Why? They say that they're concerned about the people who might lose their jobs, never mind the evidence that this won't actually happen. But this isn't credible.

For today's Republican leaders clearly feel disdain for low-wage workers. Bear in mind that such workers, even if they work full time, by and large don't pay income taxes (although they pay plenty in payroll and sales taxes), while they may receive benefits like Medicaid and food stamps. And you know what this makes them, in the eyes of the GOP: "takers," members of the contemptible 47 percent who, as Mitt Romney said to nods of approval, won't take responsibility for their own lives.

Eric Cantor, the House majority leader, offered a perfect illustration of this disdain last Labor Day: He chose to commemorate a holiday dedicated to workers by sending out a message that said nothing at all about workers, but praised the efforts of business owners instead.

The good news is that not many Americans share that disdain; just about everyone except Republican men believes that the lowest-paid workers deserve a raise. And they're right. We should raise the minimum wage, now. □

OLIVER
SÜddeutsche Zeitung
Munich
GERMANY



How Not To Fix Climate Change



JOE NOCERA
© 2013 New York Times

After much back and forth, James E. Hansen and I had agreed on a date to meet. Hansen, the director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, is the scientist most closely associated with climate change activists like Bill McKibben, who has led the charge against the Keystone XL pipeline, and Michael Brune, the executive director of the Sierra Club. In Hansen's view, the country needs to start moving away from fossil fuels now, before the damage becomes irreversible.

As regular readers know, I believe the Obama administration should approve the Keystone pipeline, which would transport oil mined and processed from the tar sands of Alberta, Canada, to refineries in the Gulf of Mexico. Like it or not, fossil fuels are going to remain the world's dominant energy source for the foreseeable future, and we are far better off getting our oil from Canada than, say, Venezuela. And the climate change effects of tar sands oil are, all in all, pretty small. I had the strong sense that Hansen hoped that once we met, I would begin to see the error of my ways.

The date we set was on Thursday, Feb. 14. The only glitch, he said, is that on the 13th, he was participating in an anti-Keystone

demonstration in front of the White House led by his friend McKibben. The plan was they'd all try to get arrested. "It is conceivable that we will be spending the night of the 13th in the clink, in which case it is not clear when I will arrive on the 14th," Hansen wrote in an email. (He added, "Yes, I know, the merits of this continuing activity may be dubious, but Bill is working his butt off so hard that I can't refuse.") I postponed the meeting.

Suddenly, it appears, the Keystone XL pipeline, which President Barack Obama temporarily blocked during his re-election campaign, is back in the news. Nebraska, which had previously opposed the pipeline, recently dropped its opposition after TransCanada, the company hoping to build it, rerouted portions of it to avoid sensitive lands and aquifers. Canada, still miffed by Obama's rejection of the pipeline last year, is threatening to sell the oil to China if the United States says no again.

In fact, this should be a no-brainer for the president, for all the reasons I stated earlier, and one more: the strategy of activists like McKibben, Brune and Hansen, who have made the Keystone pipeline their line in the sand, is utterly boneheaded.

Brune and McKibben have been very clear about what they hope to accomplish. Oil companies have invested upward of \$100 billion to extract the unconventional oil in the sands.

A pipeline is the only way to export it. The Keystone pipeline is Canada's Plan A. Plan B is a pipeline to British Columbia, which would get the oil to China. If the president blocks Keystone, and the First Nation tribes continue their staunch opposition to the western pipeline, then Canada will have the second largest oil reserves in the world – and no place to sell it. The environmental assumption of the activists is

that by choking off the supply of new oil sources like the tar sands, the U.S. – and maybe the world – will be forced to transition more quickly to green energy.

Can you see how backward this logic is? As Adam Brandt, an energy expert at Stanford University, pointed out to me recently, so long as the demand is there, energy producers are going to search for new supplies of fossil fuel – many of them using unconventional means like tar sands extraction. "With growing global demand, the economic pressure to develop unconventional resources is enormous and not going away," he said. "Can environmental groups expect to win a series of fights for decades to come, when the economic forces are aligned very strongly against them in each round?" The answer is obvious: no.

The emphasis should be on demand, not supply. If the U.S. stopped consuming so much of the world's oil, the economic need for the tar sands would evaporate.

On Monday, I finally spoke to Hansen. His knowledge and sincerity are easy to admire, even if his tactics are not. He told me he would like to see oil companies pay a fee, which would rise annually, based on carbon emissions. He said that such a tax could reduce emissions by 30 percent within 10 years. Well, maybe. But it would also likely make the expensive tar sands oil more viable.

If you really want to eliminate expensive new fossil fuel sources, the best way is to lower the price of oil, which would render them uneconomical. But, of course, that wouldn't exactly lower demand either.

In any case, McKibben, Hansen and others were arrested on Wednesday, as planned. They spent a few hours in jail and paid \$100 fines. And that was it.

Until the next time, of course. □

Spring Summer 2013 Collection: World renowned street Artistes create magnificent Foulards for Louis Vuitton

ORANJESTAD - When the emblem becomes an icon. Since 1854, when the house was created, Louis Vuitton has never stopped nurturing the relationship between craftsmanship and design. Many artists, from Stephen Sprouse to Yayoi Kusama, from Takashi Murakami to Richard Prince, under the impetus of Marc

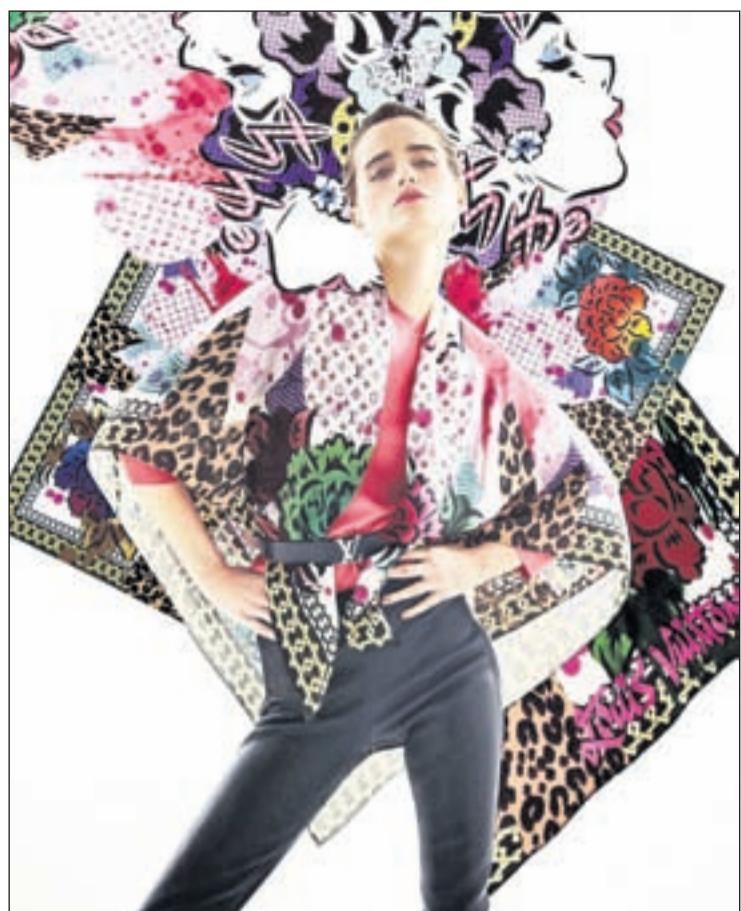
Jacobs, have collaborated on special projects, making a bag, scarf, or shoe into a desirable collector's item. For Spring-Summer 2013, Louis Vuitton has invited three personalities emerging from the street art to give a new look to the house's emblematic models. Under their impetus, the giant silk scarf, the stole and

regular silk scarf devote themselves to a new look, with inscriptions and colors bursting with style and energy. Items from women's wardrobes to wear on any occasion: for a casual arty style that opens the doors to any location, at any time in our lives.

The collection is a colorful invitation to travel far and wide, in three acts. Japanese AIKO: the Giant Four Seasons silk square; American RETNA: the Script stole; and Brazilian OsGeméos: the Mosaic silk square.

The logo becomes a signature. Remixed traditional Japanese codes, a mys-

tical alphabet, a micro-moon mosaic. The arty palette is adorned with tradition to enhance a look, a scarf that is ready to slip around your neck, like a talisman, going beyond gender, borders and generations. An art culture



"To my eyes, AIKO, RETNA and OsGeméos, represent the most complete and original expression of the emerging art scene which is coming out of street culture. They transcend their original universe and occupy their places as artists

world and the technical constraints of production," said Jeffrey Deitch, the new director of MOCA Los Angeles, and an exhibition commissioner.

The Foulards d'Artistes collection of amazing scarves for the Spring Summer 2013



that has been so dear to Louis Vuitton since its first collaboration with the artist Stephen Sprouse in 2001. On this occasion, Louis Vuitton overhauls the patterns created by Stephen Sprouse in new colors and sizes while a Monogram shawl gets an arty overprinted style, with contrasting juxtaposed color blocks.

in their own right. Their visual language is expressed in a different way. Retna has painted planes and cars, OsGeméos has worked on musical instruments, Aiko on clothing. Through the Louis Vuitton project, they have all applied themselves to an exercise of style. A mastery of fusion between creation and tradition, their imaginary

collection complement and enhance the famous Louis Vuitton classics as well as precious pieces from its newest collections. Louis Vuitton Aruba, located at the classy Renaissance Mall has a collection of eye catching Louis Vuitton accessories, shoes, bags and fashion on display to create or complement any look and every style. □